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17 April 1980

NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

JOINT ARAB ECONOMIC ACTION, FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Baghdad BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 18, 25 Mar 80 Weekly Supplement

[Two-part interview with Dr Abdul Hassan Zalzal, assistant secretary general for economic affairs of the Arab League, in Baghdad, date not given]

[18 Mar 80 p 6]

[Text] A Symposium of Government Experts on the Strategy of Joint Arab Economic Action was held in Baghdad during the second half of January 1980. The symposium was attended by a number of experts in Arab economic and social development. Among those participating was Dr Abdul Hassan Zalzal, Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs of the Arab League.

ATH-THAWRA DAILY, the organ of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, conducted the following interview with him with the aim of informing readers with the efforts made to realise Arab economic integration and the plans already drawn up in this regard.

ATH-THAWRA: How do you evaluate the results of the symposium?

Zalzal: The Symposium of Government Experts on the Strategy of Joint Arab Economic Action organised by the Arab League in implementation of a resolution of the Economic Council, was one of the most successful Arab gathering in terms of the level of its debates and results, particularly if we take into account the nature and significance of the topic discussed. A spirit of objectivity and high sense of responsibility prevailed. The participants displayed a national outlook when dealing with the issues and this gave the Symposium a pan-Arab dimension, ridding it of regionalism. The Symposium adopted a historic document on the general outline of the future of the Arab Homeland until the year 2000, containing a joint

national action programme which can be considered the beginning of a long-range national planning. The document, moreover, included the principle of pan-Arab budget, the resources of which will fund the execution of the programmes, that enjoy priority in the strategy of joint Arab action. The significance of the document lies in the fact that it will be the main item on the agenda of the first Arab Economic Summit and is worthy of adoption by the Summit as a guide to action by Arab governments. The other important aspect of the document is that it has identified the present situation prevailing in the Arab homeland and the old and new challenges it faces, especially as regards division, backwardness and subordination. The document recommends unity and balanced, independent and comprehensive economic and social development, as well as liberation and originality as measures to be adopted to meet these challenges.

The document is based on a number of indicators that confirm the commitment of Arab countries to the supreme national, cultural, economic, social and security interests, and the fact that joint Arab action is more feasible and effective than the mechanical combination of regional efforts and is larger than the mere establishment of joint projects or financial, human or commodities flow, because it requires production integration and amalgamation of Arab structures in such a way so as to consolidate Arab capabilities and increase their feasibility in order to provide a sound economic basis for national security.

The document also indicates that there is mutual interaction between national and regional development and between joint Arab action and joint economic action on the one hand, and objectives of development, security, liberation, integration and originality in the other hand. The document also stressed that the objective of development should be to raise the level of economic performance and production, meet the basic needs of the citizens, provide opportunities for productive employment and achieve social justice regionally and nationally through the adoption of national self-reliance and broad popular participation in development.

Regarding the strategic objective the document singles them out as follows:

- 1--Liberation of the Arab and his creative capabilities.
- 2--Realisation of national security with its military, intellectual, economic and technological aspects.
- 3--Acceleration of balanced, independent and comprehensive development.
- 4--Bridging of the development gap within the Arab Homeland and among its regions.
- 5--Realisation of economic integration leading to Arab economic unity.

6--Participation in the establishment of the new Arab economic order which provides for a liberated and developed Arab economic order.

The document also points out that the limited time element and limited resources and organisational difficulties necessitate the selection of a number of fields that ought to have priority. It identifies the sectors as:

- a) Realisation of military security.
- b) Development of human resources.
- c) Acquisition of technological capability and its consolidation.
- d) Realisation of food security.
- e) Development of basic industries and infrastructures.
- f) Placing economic relations and interests in the service of issues of destiny.
- g) Encouraging the flow of Arab capital investments within the Arab Homeland to secure its purchasing power.

The document, moreover, underlines the necessity of pan-Arab planning and has adopted a series of programmes that are ready for implementation within a unified national budget and within the above priorities.

As for the tools of implementation, the Arab Economic and Social Council is planning to work out the national plan for joint Arab economic action and the outline of the unified national budget, as well as to follow up their implementation. It will call on the Arab institute to take part in preparing the plans within the given outline. The Arab Economic Summit will then be asked to approve the plan and the budget, while the implementation of the plan is to be carried out through joint Arab projects, at the government, public and mixed sectors levels and, at the same time, giving the private sector a clear role.

The document also calls for the implementation of the existing collective agreement, increasing their membership and support for the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development, Arab Monetary Fund and other national organisations and institutions. The document then goes on to discuss the future threats of Zionist challenge. It warns against the continuation of Zionist presence and stresses that the total liberation of the occupied territories should be the basic strategy. It also calls for tightening of the blockade against the Zionist entity and its new bases by all means, the use of Arab economic weapons, limitation of Zionist immigration and policies of evicting Arab population, support for the steadfastness shown by the population in

the Arab territories and full and serious adherence to the principles of Arab boycott.

It also stressed on extending the boycott principles to the Egyptian regime and to those dealing with the enemy and emphasises the importance of popular awareness of the role of the boycott and support for the Palestinian Resistance.

ATH-THAWRA: Numerous economic dialogues between the Arab and foreign countries, particularly with European countries, have been conducted. Do you think the Arab side has succeeded in realising economic gains, such as the transfer of technology, through such dialogues?

Zalzala: At present the dialogue is limited to the European community, as talks with Latin American and Asian countries or Japan have not yet started. As for relations with African countries, they go beyond the idea of dialogue of effective cooperation whose principles were confirmed in the four historic documents adopted by the first Afro-Arab Summit held in Cairo in 1977. These documents defined the framework, approach, objectives, methods and joint organisations due to the special strategic position of the area.

The Arab-European dialogue is of a more complicated nature due to the diversification of its objectives, multiplicity of the parties involved, variation of their interests, the variable political and economic conditions, and its relationship with other indirect parties. Moreover, it is conducted between two different and unequal communities, one belonging to the developed countries, and the other to the developing countries.

It is obvious that each of the two communities has different stands due to the different concepts and attitudes, which are determined by their affiliations. The axis of interest on the Arab side is the political aspect related to the Palestinian issue, as a dialogue is considered a means of political struggle to gain support for this central issue and reduce support for the Zionist entity, as well as emphasising that European security cannot be isolated from the security of the Arab region.

The Arab position has been quite clear, objective and realistic, based on the understanding of the European position and the attempt to improve it and consolidate its independence.

Despite the fact that development and transfer of technology were the axis of Arab European cooperation on the economic side, what has been achieved in this field is below the minimum necessary level. The concept of division of work between the two zones has not yet been defined, whether regarding collective agreements or redistribution of some industries and joint strategic projects.

The European side continued to give priority to bilateral relations with each Arab country than to collective relationship with the Arab community. The result of these bilateral relationships has been the increase of five fold in trade exchange, compared to five years ago. The European exports to the Arab world have increased seven fold. The Arab community is now the largest customer of the European community, more important than the combined exchange with both the U.S. and Australia. European imports from the Arab world is practically limited to oil. Arab investments in the Common Market countries total about \$70 billion.

In our opinion the absence of an Arab strategy has been behind the passive results of the dialogue. No coherent and serious Arab stand has yet evolved regarding the investment of economic interests in the service of the issues of Arab destiny. It may, however, be necessary to start an Arab-European dialogue with clear and defined objectives and priorities, with emphasis on national and regional adherence and an open decisive stand linking continuation of the relationship with the European side to the improvement of its position towards our central cause.

[25 Mar 80 p 6]

[Text] ATH-THAWRA: The last session of the Arab Economic and Social Council was convened during February 1980. What were the main topics discussed and what were the principal outcome of the session?

Zalzala: The agenda of the last session of the Arab Economic and Social Council contain 12 items and among them were a number of major issues. The most important of these issues was the document on the Strategy of joint Arab Action drawn up by the Symposium of Government Experts held at Habbaniya during late January in order to submit it to the next Arab Economic Summit to be held in Amman next November.

The Council also discussed a number of studies prepared by the General Secretariat for Economic Affairs at the Arab League on economic relations with the world, and it is expected that they will be submitted to the extraordinary session of the Arab Economic and Social Council to be attended also by Arab Foreign Ministers to prepare for the Arab Economic Summit.

The last session also discussed the final draft of the Arab Unified Agreement on the Investment of Arab Funds, which was approved by Government experts at their meeting in Riyadh recently. The document contains a number of basic principles, such as the principle of Arab economic citizenship, realisation of the Arab identity of capital, balance of liabilities, and rights between the two parties in the investment relationship, providing of incentives and guarantee to Arab investment in economic development fields, the endeavour to set up a unified Arab juridical order and giving priority to Arab capital to enable it to compete with foreign capital, in

addition to treating it like national capital. The project is aimed at a developed step towards the establishment of a unified national legislation.

ATH-THAWRA: Ensuring Arab food security has a prominent place in the Arab nation's battle against the imperialist-Zionist challenges. What are the efforts made to ensure Arab food security and what are your views regarding the so-called world food crisis?

Zalzala: The food security problem is basically related to the nature of the present world economic order, the international division of work and the unequal relationship resulting from the deterioration of the food production situation in the world and the inability of production to cope with the fast and increasing demand for food.

The world's population will jump from 4 billion to 7 billion. Of these 87% will be living in the developing countries, representing new mouths in need of food.

At the national and local levels the present situation of Arab food production shows that it is the lowest production zone in the world, even when compared with similar zones in the developing countries. During the 1970s the Arab world witnessed increased dependence on the outside world for its basic foodstuff need, and its ever increasing costs have seriously affected balance of payment deficit and development.

Arab food imports amounted to about \$7 billion in 1977, a three-fold increase compared with 1973.

The Arabs, however, have suddenly become aware of the fact that theirs is the least productive zone in the world and the largest importer of food. The Arab world consumes 20 million tons of grains a year, half of which it imports. It also imports 90% of its sugar, vegetable oils, meat and dairy products. The gap, however, is expected to increase with the prevailing difference between the rate of food production (2%) and rate of increase of Arab consumption (5%).

The trend is towards further deterioration, and the shortage of grains in the Arab world is expected to increase from 11.3 million tons in 1975 to 26.1 million tons in 2000, leading to the increase of the value of the gap to \$10.3 billion. The Arab countries will have spent about \$200 billion in food imports between 1975 and 2000.

However, due to the fact that a few advanced countries monopolise the international grains market and the threats by some of them to use it as a political weapon, the Arab food problem is not merely a political problem, but primarily a political problem. Moreover, it is more serious for the Arab countries than any other zone in the world. The problem is even more serious as cultural, industrial and services development in Arab cities will be subordinated to foreign approval.

The Arab Homeland will continue to struggle against hunger unless Arab resources and efforts are mobilized in concerted effort to ensure food security and the problem of agricultural production tackled. The need for joint Arab action in this field becomes even more urgent due to the relative deterioration of the role of the agricultural sector in the Arab development plans and its decreasing participation in the Gross National Product (GNP) of majority of the Arab countries.

The outcome of the structural changes since the oil leap in the 1970s has been the relative change of Arab economy from an agricultural services economy to an industrial services economy as a result of the development of the extraction industries and the services sector.

The problem of food dependency constitutes an evidence of weak national coordination and planning. The Arab League has endeavoured to call attention to such dangers in intensive studies carried out, and has prompted the Arab Economic Council to adopt decisive policies and act at the national, regional and international levels.

Moreover, the Conference of Arab Agriculture Ministers defined the priorities in this regard by adopting six basic programmes to produce wheat, meat, sugar, vegetable oil products, fodder, fish production and strategic food stocks. The General Secretariat of Foreign Affairs and the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development have been commissioned to conduct, definite quantitative and strategic surveys--for both the short and the long term--on these commodities in the Arab countries, as well as to prepare detailed projects and means for their execution.

ATH-THAWRA: It is no secret that the level of trade exchange among Arab countries is very low, compared with the trade exchange between them and the other countries. How can this situation be redressed in a way that would serve the issue of Arab economic integration?

Zalzala: The small volume of trade exchange among Arab countries is due to a number of factors related to production, services, institutional and information aspects. Initially, trade exchange reflects the type of production and the sectoral type of its structure. Consequently, the weakness of the production basis and its backwardness restrict such exchange.

It is also known that the problem of the Arab countries is one of development. Consequently, weakness and low quality production and duplication in the Arab countries have been among the main reasons for the small volume of trade exchange.

Furthermore, foreign trade among Arab countries has faced financial, administrative and monetary difficulties that have hindered its growth, despite the collective and bilateral agreements that aimed at facilitating such trade. Although the resolution of the Arab Common Market abolished

such restriction as far back as 1964, it has not been possible to eliminate the obstacles and end the policy of circumvention. In addition, credit and foreign exchange policies failed to facilitate trade exchange.

Lack of information about the Arab commodities available for exchange has also contributed to the low trade exchange, as well as the traditional commercial relations between Arab merchants and foreign markets.

The Arab League, its specialised agencies and the Arab Economic Unity Council have endeavoured to eliminate these obstacles by adopting new approaches to realise economic integration, such as joint Arab projects that would increase Arab production for export to Arab markets and facilitate, for Arab exporters, the obtaining of credits on easy terms if they directed their exports to the Arab market. Besides, the national and regional Arab Development Funds extend easy-term loans to encourage production and infra-structure projects, particularly in the field of communications in a way that will serve trade exchanges.

CSO: 4820

SOVIET INVASION: PLAN TO 'ENCIRCLE CHINA'

Paris LE MONDE in French 6 Mar 80 p 2

[Article by Bernard Dupeigne*]

[Text] What can be done to stop the inadmissible's being established and from injustice's being unanswered?

At this time I cannot say that all was well in Afghanistan before 1978. Indeed reforms were necessary, but aren't they always in the USSR, 'n the U.S. and in France?

Afghans have always jealously guarded their independence and up to the present they succeeded in resisting any foreign colonization attempts. The workers and the unions exhibited as the mainstay of the revolutionary regime, are practically nonexistent in a country which is still rural and where the cities account only for 11 percent of the population. In the free elections of 1965, when Babrak Karmal was elected deputy for Kabul, and in those of 1969, the People's Democratic Party obtained only a very small percentage of the votes.

The present communist regime's allegiance to the Soviets does not reflect the people's aspirations. It was established on 27 April 1978 by Nur Mohammed Taraki's military coup d'tat organized by the Soviet advisors in the Afghan army. Immediately, this foreign-inspired regime was attacked in all parts of the country: December 1978, rebellion in Nuristan, crushed by rapalm; rebellion in Paktia, beginning in January 1979; 18 March 1979 insurrection in Herat, where repressive measures victimized thousands; 23 June, demonstrations by the Hazaras, drowned in blood. About the middle of 1979 hundreds of Soviet "advisors" had been killed in combat. The rebellion spread through Nuristan, Paktia, Herat, Hazaradzat, the Province of Maimana, Badakhshan and Pandshir. The government held only the cities and the highways. There were at least 12,000 prisoners in Kabul alone, and thousands of these prisoners were executed.

* Ethnologist in charge of the Asian collection in the Museum of Man.

Harizullah Amin, prime minister, minister of foreign affairs, was suspected of not being radical enough. Forewarned of the decision to eliminate him, he made the first move, overthrew Taraki on 16 September 1979 and killed him. Moscow immediately pledged its support to the new president. The great offensive of November 1979 against the Paktia Pachrounes, not having had the expected results, the Soviet Government felt that the country was slipping through its fingers, and decided to intervene directly.

On 27 December 1979 Babrak Karmal, head of Parcham (the Flag), a surviving Marxist group in Kabul, life and soul of the PARCHAM newspaper from 1968 to 1969, was brought from Prague and installed in office by a massive number of units who had arrived from the USSR. Amin was executed with his three wives and 20 children. At least 80,000 powerfully armed Soviet troops now occupy Afghanistan.

The USSR pretends to be surprised at the international indignation aroused by this invasion and by Carter's immediate reaction (he will owe his reelection to his firmness in this matter). It has the audacity to pretend that it acted at the request of the Afghan Government to counter an American invasion. However, since the traumatic Vietnam defeat in 1975, the U.S. has pulled out from Asia: from Afghanistan, leaving the coast clear for the USSR; from Pakistan which they wanted to punish for attempting to equip themselves with a nuclear arm; from Iran, constrained and forced; from Turkey where the American bases had been closed in 1975 by Ecevit's socialist government as a reprisal against the American embargo on the delivery of arms.

A Plan for the Encirclement of China

The invasion of Afghanistan is a part of the Soviet plan to encircle China: Afghanistan after Vietnam, after Laos, annexed by Vietnam, after Cambodia which has become a Vietnamese colony. But this invasion will only hasten the Washington-Peking alliance which it wanted to counteract.

From Moscow, Georges Marchais, who evidently had never heard anyone speak of Afghanistan before, adds arrogantly: the USSR had intervened in order to support the government against the machinations of the Afghan feudalists. He speaks with relish of the right to "prima noctis" (droit de cuissage); I defy Marchais to produce even one reference to this "right," which does not exist in Afghanistan but which one runs across in some special French enterprises.

On television, curiously enough, while he is never opposed by someone who is capable of proving him a liar, Marchais treats those resisting the Soviet invasion as "feudalists." He should have read the studies by French historians beforehand, (not to mention those of the Center of Marxist Studies and Research, financed by the PCF: ON FEUDALISM, Social Editions, 1974) which would have allowed him to realize that on no account can Afghanistan be described as feudalistic. Had the regime of a country not suited the USSR, would that have been sufficient reason for it to give itself the right to

invade it militarily? In the same manner as the Germans accused the French resistance of being composed of terrorists and communists, Marchais calls Afghan resistance feudalistic or Islamic fanaticism; but evidently since he was in Germany at that time he must be excused for not knowing anything about the French resistance. And Babrak is probably the short-lived Petain of Afghanistan.

On the news televised on 29 January, a member of the CGT delegation in Kabul stated that the Soviets had come to deliver the population from Amin's regime, and pretended to be indignant because no one mentioned the crimes committed by Amin. This is formidable impudence, just as if Maurice Thorez had reproached the Westerners for not having denounced Stalin's crimes; Amin was Taraki's right arm, he had been installed by the Soviets and was only in power for 100 days. On 19 September 1979, Amnesty International had issued a 28-page crushing report against the regime. On 6 October LE MONDE published an appeal calling upon Afghanistan's friends to muster against the repression. And many other articles were published in the press on the exactions of the regime, but evidently not in L'HUMANITE.

In France, it is better not to think too much about Afghanistan; everyone is afraid of war, even though the Vietnam war did not result in a worldwide crisis. It is not by letting the USSR annex its neighbors without reacting that peace will be preserved; on the contrary it is because Germany could expand with impunity that it felt it was powerful enough to invade France. Hitler also started on a small scale.

Our humanism takes offense at the interruption of the sale of grains to the USSR, but much less at the intensive Soviet bombardment and napalm poured on the Afghan villages: if one does not want war, the Soviet Union, which is not even capable of feeding its own population, must be reached in its most sensitive spot. Neither is anyone worrying about the terrible famine which could strike Afghanistan this spring.

As regards the Olympic games to be held in Moscow, which our government seems to wish to attend, it would be fitting to refuse the aggressor the international prestige and benefits which would certainly accrue to him, as though nothing were happening on his soil. It has already been said that the Olympic games held in Berlin in 1936 contributed to Hitler's self-confidence. Boycotting the games would also point out to the Soviets the international disapproval provoked by the undertakings of its distant leaders.

Boycotting the Moscow games will not mean the death of the games at all. The USSR needs them very badly in order to manifest its greatness, and will be represented at the next Olympic games, even in the U.S. The ideal of the Olympic games is an ideal of brotherhood and not of conquests nor chauvinistic competition.

7993

CSO: 4900

NEW 'SPY' DOCUMENTS ALLEGE U.S. PLOTS

Forqan, Guerrilla Organizations

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 21 Feb 80 p 2

[Article: "Spy Center Documents Concerning Formation of a Guerrilla Force and the Nature of the Forqan Group"]

[Text] From: The American Embassy in Tehran

To: The State Department, Washington, D.C.

Subject: Request for assistance in forming irregular military groups (guerrillas) against the Islamic movement.

Drafted by: Laingen, Tomseth, Sha'z [as published]

1. Top Secret

2. Summary: On 8 August Fereydun Afshar asked the political attache for assistance in forming a military group in Azerbaijan which could be useful in repelling the forces of the Islamic movement. The political attache rejected the request and pointed out that American policy vis-a-vis Iran's internal affairs is one of noninterference. Afshar gave an unexpected reply, but said he would go along in any case.

3. On the 8th of August Fereydun Afshar contacted the Charge d'Affaires twice and requested an appointment. The Charge thought the above was an individual with whom Ramsey Clark had told him to get in touch with several weeks ago in order to improve conditions for Jews in Iran. In any case, the Charge told the Political Attache to contact Afshar and determine what he wanted and it later became clear that Afshar had other things on his mind besides the Jewish question. Afshar told the Political Attache that he had graduated from the institutions of higher learning in Urmia and Tabriz and that he had studied in several American universities (among them, Idaho, Oklahoma, Halm, Chicago, and Johns Hopkins) and that he had a Ph D in geology. In order to complete his studies he had also spent a

short time in the Iranian Military College between the completion of his B.A. and his return to America. When petroleum was nationalized in Iran Afshar was called back to Iran to help locate oil fields. He was initially employed in Qom in product production. He then went to the University of Tehran and in 1956 he was elected to the Senate as the Urmia representative. In any case, in 1961, he resigned because of political conflicts and resumed teaching at Tehran University.

4. Afshar said that persons like himself, while they were never happy with the shah, most of the masses had definitely become tired of the activities of the Mollas in Iran and it is clear that they are incapable of creating a modern economy. He said he had recently returned from Urmia and that he had witnessed events there resulting from clashes between the Kurds and the local authorities in Sarv. He declared that every part of Kordestan is completely controlled by the Kurds and the Iraqis. They have occupied more than six outposts of the Gendarmes without any resistance and they have exhausted and wounded the guards who went there from Urmia to besiege them. He said that the guardsmen were undisciplined and untrained, easily defeated even by the Kurds, who are not well organized, and the army has refused to fight in Urmia.

5. Afshar said that such conditions were ideal for what he had decided to do. He said it would be easy to recruit a force of 10-30 thousand men in Azerbaijan and that we could train them in an isolated part of Kordestan and then send them to Northwestern Iran. He said that Iran has about 18 million Turks, about 16 million of whom are Azari Turks who are scattered from Azerbaijan to the heart of Tehran, and there are about 2 million Turkomans and Qashqais in the Northeast and the South. There are no more than 9 million pure Persians and all of them are concentrated in central Iran. They have been surrounded by Turkish soldiers, Kurds, Arabs, and Baluchis. The clergy have authority among the Persians only. If the Turks were to take over and to govern Northwestern Iran and Tehran, in the rest of the country, the Persian territories, which do not have minority groups, would follow them in ousting the clergy.

6. Afshar clearly indicated that he needs help to carry out his plans, and they need, at a minimum, money in order to get started. Arms and training would be useful. Most Turks have straight hair and blue eyes.

He said that if a number of foreign advisors assisted with strategy making it would not be superfluous. With the central government's loss of control over the regions in Azerbaijan with the Turks, it is unlikely that anyone could in any way predict what might happen there. He hoped that the U.S. realizes the value of supporting someone like him. He said I have graduated from your schools, I know the things you believe in and I believe in them also. The real danger is not that we might allow the Moslems to take over everything, and not that the left wants to expel them after a little while and take over power. The most important thing, he said, is that when the crisis in Iran has gone on awhile the Soviets

may seize an opportune moment and intervene, and this is a true danger to the interests of America in this part of the world, not that Leftist Iranians are in the Prime Minister's office, because there are not many Marxist supporters in Iran.

7. The Political Attache told Afshar that America cannot support his plan and that this is contrary to American policy to interfere in Iran's internal affairs.

He said that after the consequences of Vietnam and Watergate the American people will not tolerate such foreign adventures. Afshar gave an unexpected reply to the political attache. [The political attache] thinks it will be important to at least try to convince him of the soundness of the plan and that he will pursue it in any case.

8. Afshar's view is one of the most potently evocative of conspiracy sentiment encountered to date by the political attache. Afshar is a professional student whose life has been a difficult one. He has identified the deficiencies of this system for the kind of person he is and the Islamic Republic is not compatible with his personal values and feelings. He does not want to do this because of his own misfortunes but he is forming this force because of the necessity of the time. It appears that he has assessed the weakness of the enemy with accuracy but whether he will be able to form such a group or not is not clear.

If one would wish for such a force to be formed, however, a person such as Afshar would probably do a better job of it than a high-ranking army officer or a highly placed materialist making plans from Paris or Los Angeles or a young psychiatrist cruising Tehran in a BMW or someone who views a conspiracy as a kind of game.

Laingen

Date: 11 July 1979

Drafted by: Stampler

From: American Embassy Tehran

To: Sec State Wash DC--Immediate

Letter sent to American embassies in Dubai, Ankara, Baghdad, Islamabad, Jeddah, Kabul, Kuwait, Panama, and several other countries.

Subject: A brief study of the Forqan Group

1. Entire Text; Reporting Cable
2. An old friend of the Political Officer who is a long-standing scholar and whose home in past years was a haven and a center for ideological

discussions for his students has some general comments about the Forqan Group.

3. According to the source:

Twelve of his old students are members of the Forqan Group in Tehran, which has about 40 or 50 members. The source added that they are a mixture of the right and the left but most of them are nonaligned. Apart from a few extremists most of them accept Islamic principles and they feel that terrorism is a means whereby they can rid themselves of clergymen who are not in agreement with their views.

A Forqan member boasts that they intend to start weekly terrorist killings of clergymen and they will continue until they succeed. The problem is that they have not reached a consensus as to what would constitute success.

4. The source explained that the Forqan members he is in touch with are inclined to direct their attention to domestic matters. It does not appear that they have any interest in going after foreigners. He did not discount the possibility that the Forqan has ties with smaller Islamic groups. He thought the Forqan organizations in Tehran are strong and that the ones outside Tehran are weak.

Secret--Naas

At the conclusion of this disclosure the remark was made that America has taken a group into consideration and put its finger on it and made contact with an anti-revolutionary specter in order to make use of it at the appropriate time, in a united front against Islam and against Imam Khomeyni. The hand of American imperialism is stained with blood, not only in Iran but throughout the world and thousands of people throughout the world have fallen to the ground. It is for this reason that the Imam considers America "The Great Satan."

When he calls America the Great Satan he is talking about its ideology and politics.

In our literature Satan is not a person with whom one may negotiate and according to the same message that the Imam has lately given we must confront systems that oppress the weak with our fists.

Rights should be taken from them by force. One must fight with Satan, and especially "The Great Satan," and take one's rights. Meaning one must resist, and take back the traitor Shah and the wealth he plundered by force from the Great Satan. We ask that the responsible authorities, on the basis of one of these documents which shows that these people had relations with the Forqan group, try Mr Tomseth, who is now in the Foreign Ministry and in the same way, those who were in contact with this group should be tried and some of the blood that has been spilled be given back.

Coup d'Etat Plan

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 21 Feb 80 p 12

[Article: "Disclosure by Moslem Students Following the Line of Imam Khomeyni Concerning: American Plans for a Coup d'Etat in Iran"]

[Text] The Moslem students, followers of the line of the absolute Imam, who are stationed at the American spy center, after a relatively long period of time, held a radio-television press conference. At the press conference, which was attended by a large number of foreign and domestic reporters, new documents were exposed regarding American schemes against the Islamic revolution of Iran. For the first time, following the program for domestic and foreign reporters, yesterday's disclosure was also carried out for those present in front of the spy den. One of the students read one of the exposed documents.

One of the participating students initially referred to the interference and scheming of America against the revolution of Iran and said: America, with the intention of weakening the leadership of Imam Khomeyni and deflecting the path of the revolution of Iran, has carried out activities and programs, examples of which will be revealed in today's documents.

The first document which was released by the students yesterday dealt with an anticipated coup d'etat by a former minister in the Shah's regime. The document, classified top secret, was dated 3 August 1979.

On 28 July Hushang Nehavandi, former minister of welfare and housing, let it be known that the people had become dissatisfied with the present regime and that it could possibly get worse. He referred to the Kurds, saying they are one of the most powerful forces in Iran and that the central government's army is falling apart. He predicted that a coup d'etat, led by some of the army's commanders and supported by the Kurds, would take place in 6 to 8 weeks.

Nehavandi has predicted that if this coup d'etat does not succeed the communists would eventually take over. This document also stated that Hushang Nehavandi, who was president of Tehran University until the end of the lowly former regime and who had a friendly and close relationship with the embassy's cultural attache. The attache was known to be a knowledgeable person in the field of Iranian affairs and as an analyst of the Iranian revolution. Nehavandi got in touch with him and gave him information about the present situation in Iran. Nehavandi explained that he went into hiding during the overthrow of the Shah, then went to Kordestan, and then set out from there for Turkey. Nehavandi described the Iranian situation as dangerous and in a state of deterioration and said that disorder in Iran had become widespread, and that there are two major factions in the higher echelons of government, one of them following traditional Iranian practices and the other tending towards economic overextension.

Tudeh Party Activities

In another part of the document, in continuing his conversations with the cultural attache of the embassy, Nehavandi referred to the issue of the Tudeh Party. He said: The Tudeh Party has penetrated with a particular cleverness and has burrowed its way into important groups, including the military, and it is waiting for a good opportunity. The present time, however, is not an appropriate time for the Tudeh, because strong anti-communist sentiments actively prevail among the people, but after awhile when confusion and disorder increase, the communists will be more appealing.

In continuing his conversation with this officer of the spy center, Nehavandi referred to the Kurds, and said: The Kurds are one of the most powerful forces (according to him almost 100,000 of them are armed) and the best organized, and they control about 100 to 150 kilometers in the region of Iraq and Turkey. He thought that driving them out was really impossible, especially when the government's forces are in a fragmented state.

At the end of these discussions, Nehavandi referred to the occurrence of an eminent coup d'etat which would take place in 6 to 8 weeks, after having discussed the interference of governments such as Israel and Saudi Arabia in the internal affairs of Iran, and he said: A number of military commanders will take this action, and in the event that this coup d'etat does not materialize, the situation in Iran will take a new form. Nehavandi, who is an established student of parliamentary monarchies such as Britain's and who does not call himself a supporter of the Shah, at another point in this document gave other information to the cultural attache of the embassy and described the situation in Iran as unstable and fragmented.

Training of Groups Who Are Against the Regime of Islamic Republic

Firuz Sharifi was one of the persons who was in touch with the members of this spy center, made suggestions and sought their help in order to take action against the Islamic Republic of Iran and the government in power. This man, who was the director of "Iziran" Company and who took part in planning computer programming projects, had contacted Charles Naas and Stempler and held discussions with them. This individual, during his meetings with persons and employees of the spy center, requested a revision of political relations with Iran and added that he would make a long trip to America for that purpose. According to this individual, in the conversations he had with members of the embassy, a number of commanders from the Shah's army want to cooperate and in the same talk he added that General Oveysi was among them and that he was an instigator of the Naqadeh revolt. Continuing these talks, Sharifi asked for financial help and announced that during his trip abroad he would undertake to buy a poultry incubator. In answer to a suggestion from an employee

of the embassy concerning the purchase of weapons and its probability, he answered that he had studied the purchasing of heavy weapons and that he was not unwilling to buy them. In continuing his discussions with members of the embassy, this time Sharifi added that the children of those who were condemned to death in the revolutionary courts are killing the revolutionary guards and they do it mostly at night. He also added that this group has a great inclination to take action against the Iranian revolution and that they want to carry out activities and programs against the revolution of Iran. Then he referred to the news of the martyrdom of four revolutionary guards on 26 April and said that these revolutionary guards were killed by attacks from the children of condemned persons of the former regime. Then Sharifi suggested that a group be organized and trained for the purpose of overthrowing the current regime. Towards this end he had taken a trip and met with representatives of extremist groups and two of Shapur Bakhtiar's supporters were also present at these meetings. Then Sharifi referred to his meetings with an American engineer named Ford and brought up some of the topics of his discussions with him. According to Sharifi, when he went to Ford's house this individual had laid out many weapons around his room and he also had suitcases full of explosives. While explaining the issues, Ford referred to the formation of a 200-man group composed of Khomeyni's opponents and he added that he trained this group and has kept them in a state of readiness. Ford then referred to the Shah's mistakes and added that the Shah, like every other person, has made mistakes and that these mistakes were not of a sufficient magnitude to necessitate his overthrow. This American engineer, in another part of his talks with Sharifi, referred to the issue of bribe-taking in Iran and he said that bribe-taking is a common characteristic of Iranians and that it is so prevalent that every American, after staying in Iran awhile, can be bought.

117 Opposition Groups

Ford then referred to the groups opposing the regime of the Islamic Republic and said that in Iran there are close to 117 groups opposed to the regime. He said he had contacts with a number of them and he knows that they have about 20,000 members. Most of their members are crazy or mentally unstable persons. On the basis of studies which he has made there are also opposition groups outside Iran who could be easily brought here with a sum of money (about 50 million).

Ford then referred to the issue of blowing up television and radio stations. He added that after drawing up a plan, he had prepared a large quantity of TNT, equivalent to 500 kilos, and he intended to blow up the radio and television station and to destroy all its installations and personnel.

Relations Between Police and Army

Another document disclosed during yesterday's program was a top-secret document drafted by Matrisko and Tomseth. It said in this document: The

political attache of the embassy passed an evening with an interesting Iranian military officer and a member of his family who had a thorough knowledge of the circumstances and conditions of the revolution. The old friends of these two individuals are unhappy with the changes that have taken place but their families are making great efforts to strengthen the current regime. The host of this evening gathering and dinner was a police lieutenant who was previously transferred to the National Police Helicopter Organization. During the revolution he served as a pilot for the Prime Minister (Bazargan) and other members of the cabinet. His usual task was to take the Prime Minister and members of the cabinet to Qom for meetings. This individual, who asked to be relieved of his job several times, is a person who is opposed to the clergy and who believes that the clergy are bringing about the ruin of the country. He has called the members of the Cabinet of the Provisional Government tools of the religious people. This individual then provided other information to the embassy's political attache concerning the army and the police. This lieutenant's father-in-law, who is a high-ranking retired army officer and a Kurd, retired 12 years ago, but this matter did not keep him out of prison after the current regime took power. He was in prison 41 days and all of his cellmates were executed. His imprisonment coincided with his son-in-law's appointment as the Prime Minister's helicopter pilot and his son's appointment as the head of the Iranian Consul in Baku. The general expressed satisfaction concerning the good treatment he received from prison employees and officials and it was finally decided to release him from prison. Throughout the evening's gathering the retired general was called to the telephone and every time he came back he gave extraordinarily bad accounts of the conditions in Paveh. In continuing his talks he referred to having close relations with Palizban and said that he also had contacts with retired officers other than Palizban. This relationship indicates that this group of officer's had contacts with a number of Iranian officials who helped a number of them to escape. For example, some of them admitted that General Mobsari escaped with this group's help, went to Turkey after leaving Iran and fled in a black Mercedes which was waiting there for him. The amount paid for the escape of generals and the use of diplomatic passports was about 40,000 tumans. One of the guests at this event said that Mobsari, after he escaped from Iran, met with Helms, former head of CIA and former American Ambassador to Iran. Helms telephoned the American Embassy in Iran and requested the issuance of a visa for the aforementioned person. This shows the extent of the relationship of CIA agents with a number of people in Iran.

9310

CSO: 4906

STRATEGIC CONSEQUENCES OF U.S. LOSS OF IRAN ANALYZED

Stuttgart MARINE-RUNDSCHAU in German Mar 80 pp 139-149

[Article by Arooj Taha: "Strategic Consequences of Developments in Iran"]

[Text] This article by a Pakistani naval officer, several times a contributor to MARINE-RUNDSCHAU (October 1977 and March 1979), was written prior to November 1979. Shortly thereafter, two cataclysmic events took place in the geographical area under discussion: the taking of hostages at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The author naturally could not have foreseen these events, which to a singular degree focused the attention of the world on this region. The author has therefore sought in a postscript to update his analysis to mid-January of 1980 and to add some thoughts on the U.S.-Iranian crisis and the Afghanistan situation.*

The entire world is presently being rocked by political and economic confrontations and military conflicts. In this time of mutual dependence and the polarization of states -- the former occasioned by the scarcity of raw materials sources and the latter by power struggles between the super-powers -- every region and every state has acquired significance within the framework of the international balance of power. Changes in the political and economic status quo anywhere in the world are capable of influencing the international balance or of shifting it toward one side or the other. But tucked away in one corner of the colossal Asian land mass is a small territory that may well be in a position to exert a greater influence on the international strategic situation than any other territory in the world, including Western Europe or the Middle East. This small area is the heart of the west-Asian region. Its most important section in more than one respect is Iran; the others are Pakistan and Afghanistan. In the event that this region were to succumb to Soviet communism, or that its members were to seek their national survival under Moscow's security umbrella, communism would spread unchecked in southern Asia and the Middle East. The Soviet sphere of influence would then extend as far as

* Translation by J. Rohwer

Malaysia and Thailand on one side and Saudi Arabia and eastern Africa on the other. The resulting strategic picture of Asia and Africa would bear little similarity -- if any at all -- to the former conditions of a kind of power balance on these two continents.

The west-Asian region is both obviously as well as imperceptibly in the throes of great change. The direction in which this wave of change will go and what its final, or at least decisive, high point will be is of the greatest interest and utmost importance to the political analyst, if not to every intelligent observer of the world scene in general. The outcome of development in this region will cause far-reaching strategic reverberations for the entire globe.

Upon closer examination, the developments now unfolding in this region should not have been totally unexpected. But their time frame and the rapidity with which they occurred added to them a definite element of surprise. Moreover, the intensity and rapid progress of developments in all three countries confused most observers of the region. This is perhaps one reason why the probable strategic consequences of developments there have not yet come into proper focus, or why most of the industrial countries have as yet been unable to define their new policies with respect to the region. Another reason for this apparent omission is of course the volatility and uncertainty surrounding the situation in the countries in this area.

The stormy political changes that took place in these countries between 1977 and 1979 are indeed well known and need not be recounted here. But it should be mentioned that the development of all three countries does show something in common despite the many differences that derived from their individual domestic circumstances and from the manner in which the existing order was overthrown in each of them. Basic here is the fact that both the social and political systems as well as the values in each of these countries are presently experiencing upheaval. Actually, the word ideological would be more appropriate than social, for it is ideology -- the mentality, the basis for national behavior -- that is undergoing a major shift here. Consequently, the change is not superficial, as it might appear from a political angle; rather, it penetrates deeply into the nature of each state. Another common factor is that regardless of whether the countries are governed more in the direction of the right or the left, the religion of Islam, to which the vast majority of the masses belong, has been chosen to play an increasingly more important role in shaping their national policies. But this does not mean that the period of transition to an Islamic system will be smooth and easy in these countries. On the contrary, it could become a very difficult and laborious task, and its success will depend on intelligent and stable leadership that would have to remain in power for a considerable time in each of them.

The strategic importance of each one of the three countries is extraordinary, and developments there will consequently have a serious impact on the

strategic contest between the superpowers. The scope of such an assessment would, however, exceed the capacities of an article of this kind. This article will therefore concentrate on Iran, which in any case is the most important country in the west-Asian region.

Up until 1977, Iran was a bastion of American might in Asia. There have been few parallels to the closeness of reciprocal ties and political agreement between Iran and the United States. It existed for nearly three decades -- specifically since restoration of the young Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to the Iranian throne in 1953 after the CIA had helped wrest power from Mossadeq, the country's nationalist prime minister.¹ In May 1961, the shah paved the way to assumption of absolute rule by dissolving the 20th Majlis, the Iranian parliament. From that point on, the shah functioned as a kind of guardian of American interests in the Middle East and southern Asia. In fact, Iran occupied just as important a position in U.S. global strategy as any NATO country. The high point of Iranian support for the United States was reached in 1973, when Iran stood by America during the oil embargo and continued to supply oil to all its Western allies, including South Africa and Israel.

All indications are that the central object of American interests in this country was Iranian oil, with estimated certain reserves of 60 billion barrels, the third largest reserves in the Middle East after Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. But equally important, if not more so, is Iran's geographical location, which gave this country major significance in terms of American strategic aims.

As early as 1942, President Roosevelt² considered "the defense of Iran vital to the defense of the United States." Added to this were several other factors that intertwined Iran with American policy. The power struggle between the two superpowers has always declared advantages for one of the two sides to be the ruination of the other and made a target of them. Consequently, the Soviet interest in Iran lay -- in addition to other factors -- in precisely the same reasons for which the United States was striving to gain influence over Iran.

In the last years of his rule, particularly after 1973, the shah sought broader cooperation with the Soviet Union while remaining essentially a reliable ally of the United States. This was done in part for economic reasons and in part to appease the Soviet Union, thus reducing pressure by the leftists on Iranian domestic policy. The shah's relations with the Soviets were not disturbing to the Americans since all three parties knew that they were superficial. Iran and the Soviet Union were completely aware of their fundamental differences as well as their different national interests.

One should therefore say something about the role of the two superpowers in the 1978-79 Iranian revolution before examining the strategic

consequences of developments in Iran. The subject would be extremely fascinating, particularly with reference to the United States. But this area is so broad that it would lead too far afield. Its proper treatment could doubtless be the subject of many books and articles in the future. Only a few remarks are in order here. The superpowers have been accused by both the ex-shah and Khomeyni of interfering in one way or another in the internal affairs of Iran. Both governments, the Soviet and the American, have issued official denials.

It is a generally accepted assumption that the Soviet Union had a substantial interest in destabilizing the situation in Iran under the shah. The Soviets have a long history of interference in Iranian affairs. According to Ramazani,³ the problems in Iranian-Soviet relations in 1945-46 led "to the establishment of two separate regimes in northern Iran; the Soviet Union was using the Red Army, the party apparatus and diplomatic channels to support openly the rebellion of the Azers and the Kurds against the central government." But the Soviets apparently had no need for great haste. They made gradual, but effective, inroads in Iranian political and social organs by way of leftist uprisings in Iran. They needed time to consolidate the leftist forces in the country so that when the time came for political change in Iran, the communists would emerge from the struggle as the strongest force to fill the power vacuum. The Soviets were probably not seeking a revolutionary situation in Iran that soon, but after it had developed, they naturally took advantage of it and supported it through the country's leftists. The Soviet Union has lost nothing in the exiling of the shah; on the contrary, it ultimately stands to profit from the strategic consequences.

The American role is substantially more involved. The shah himself accuses the United States of having countenanced his overthrow.⁴ Much more obvious was the anti-shah function pursued actively by the U.S. press and media. The same newspapers and media, even the same correspondents who in the past had constantly praised the shah and his government, published a torrent of material against him beginning in the last quarter of 1977 and continuing up to the end of his reign in January 1979. There is no doubt that the anti-shah propaganda had a noticeable effect on the course of events in Iran and on the forces that established themselves on the side of and against the shah inside and outside the country. It is perhaps difficult to believe that the United States sought the overthrow of the shah or secretly allowed it to happen. Henry Kissinger said⁵ that the fall of the shah constituted "the biggest foreign-policy debacle for the United States in a generation." But equally incredible is the explanation generally given by American officials: that their government was taken by surprise as the result of an incorrect assessment on the part of the intelligence agencies as well as the foreign policy planners.⁶ Even if one accepts the fact of the incompetence of American civilian and military officials who were concerned with Iran, what about the unofficial quarters where routine studies of the scene are conducted? The United States has more than a dozen institutions and research facilities that

specialize in the analysis of Iran or the Persian Gulf. Their scientists regularly publish quantities of independent reports and judgments on the Iranian situation. These sources were indeed known to the planners and could have been used for an objective and realistic evaluation of the events in Iran. The American government has glossed over without explanation the question of why the American media and press switched to an anti-shah line almost in a body and almost over night. The sequence of events permits an interesting, even ironic, comparison with the overthrow of the ex-shah's father in 1941. Prof Ramasani, an Iranian scholar, writes in his book⁷ that many Persians believe "that the British had set in motion the chain of events that led to the abdication of Reza Shah. They launched a relentless campaign against Reza Shah from radio stations in London and Delhi." It is nevertheless a fact that the United States had everything to lose from a politically unstable and alienated Iran.

Aside from the fact that Iran served as a lucrative market for weapons and industrial goods, it was still of immense value to the United States in many other ways; for example:

As a source of oil (just as much so for Israel and South Africa);

As a protector of the Persian Gulf;

For the balance of power in the Middle East;

As a link in the chain of defense of perimeter areas established by the United States to check communist expansion, and as a military listening post directed against the Soviet Union;

As a buffer against Soviet onslaughts and penetration to southern Asia, the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea.

Oil Sources

A direct consequence of the political changeover in Iran was seen in the supplies of oil for the United States and some other countries. Major cutbacks in production that were caused by the chaotic situation stopped the delivery of crude oil to that country because the new Iranian government was shipping all of its crude to other purchasers who were now being given preference over the United States. Exports of Iranian crude to South Africa and Israel, which up to that time had constituted 50 percent of those countries' needs, were halted. While South Africa to all appearances was left to its own devices, the United States assumed responsibility for meeting Israel's oil requirements. Some of America's oil imports (chiefly from Saudi Arabia) began to be siphoned off for Israel, a situation that caused disorder in the domestic market. The result was not only a tremendous increase in gasoline prices in the United States but also an acute shortage. This caused the American oil consumer to be hit with a

double blow. Iran nevertheless has to sell its crude oil. As a consequence of an increase in production (which reached a level of 4 million barrels a day in September 1979), deliveries to the United States were restored to nearly normal levels. In November 1979, at the time of the hostage-taking in Tehran by Iranian students, the Iranian government once again cut off oil deliveries to the United States in response to the freezing of Iranian assets in America.

This brought about a great change for Americans in the availability of oil from the Persian Gulf. In the event that the Arab countries were to resort once again to an oil boycott of the United States and other pro-Israeli countries in order to force a solution to the Palestine problem, Iran would be more than ready to participate. The probability of such a boycott also harbors disastrous consequences to the extent that it could split the Western bloc, whose members have varying energy sources of their own and are consequently dependent in differing degrees upon the Persian Gulf. The Soviet Union would profit tremendously in both instances: from a denial of Arab and Iranian oil to the United States (and some other NATO countries) and from dissension involving the United States and some of its allies. Some observers think that an oil boycott would be effective only within the next few years, because thereafter the development of alternative energy sources and of oil fields in the North Sea, Alaska and Mexico would eliminate the West's dependence on oil from the Middle East. This could be the case, but it is questionable. Notwithstanding, the next few years can be regarded as significant in the East-West confrontation, and it could be that the Soviet Union will be working during this time to bring about a decisive change in the power balance in its favor.

Security of the Persian Gulf

Iran made an ideal police outpost on the Persian Gulf for the United States. It controls the forefront of and access to the Gulf as well as its entire northern waters. Militarily, Iran has always been the dominant power on the Persian Gulf. Its military superiority used to be so great that the naval, air and ground forces of all other Persian Gulf states combined did not approach the personnel strength of the Iranian armed forces and their weapons. When in a blitz operation in 1971 the Iranian armed forces occupied the islands of Abu Moussa and the Tumbs, which lie directly at the entrance to the Gulf, none of the Arab states offered any continued resistance whatever. The shah played the role of policeman in a reasonably responsible and resolute manner. After the Shatt al Arab conflict between Iran and Iraq was settled in 1974, a peace of sorts had reigned in the Persian Gulf area. It was Iran's responsibility to deal with regional conflicts, and it was up to America to keep the Soviet Union out of the area. This system has been upset. The Iranian revolution has destabilized the region of the Persian Gulf.

A sudden vacuum has developed on the regional level in the Gulf. It appears unprotected and vulnerable to attack. Up to this point no one has

threatened it, but trouble could break out at any time. The United States would then be in a difficult situation. Could it look on while a regional conflict developed? If it were to interfere too soon in regional quarrels, this might constitute an overreaction that would jeopardize balance and restraint in its global struggle against the Soviet Union. On the other hand, were it to stand aloof from the regional situation, this could pave the way for the Soviet Union to step in and assume a larger role in the Persian Gulf. Moreover, in any kind of serious conflict with the United States, the Iranians themselves might close the Gulf to American and NATO ships. Another possibility would be for the United States to blockade the Gulf in the event that America were denied Iranian oil for any length of time.

Now that the security of the Persian Gulf is in jeopardy, and U.S. armed forces no longer have access to Iranian naval and military bases, American strategists must find alternatives. Diego Garcia, the American naval base in the Indian Ocean, is too far away -- 2,100 miles from the Persian Gulf. The American naval strategists consequently have had to revise their plans for this region in great haste. Oman is probably the next point around which American naval strategy will revolve in the Gulf and the northern waters of the Arabian Sea. Its superior strategic location makes this state the only country besides Iran that is in a position to control the Strait of Hormuz, which is the entrance to the Gulf, and the Gulf of Oman, through which the approach to the Persian Gulf is made. Oman is weak and inexperienced. The leftist rebellion in Dhofar Province is not dead and could be rekindled at any time. It is improbable that Oman could resist American pressure or the temptation to become an instrument of U.S. strategy in this region. Resistance could, however, come from several states of the region -- especially Iraq and Iran, though for different reasons. American moves in the direction of the Persian Gulf would also inevitably spur the Soviets on to step up their pressure on this region. The deepening power struggle is already apparent. No sooner had the U.S. fleet made known its plans to increase the number and length of its ports of call by combat vessels of the Pacific fleet at locations within 30 miles of Oman,⁸ but Soviet vessels also began making more frequent stops on the Gulf. According to Iranian sources, a Soviet Petya frigate together with two Vega AGI's and a Natya mine detector were on lengthy cruises in the Gulf during September 1979. The rivalry between the superpowers is heightening tensions among the regional states, especially between Iran and the Arabs -- who, although united in their stand against Israel, are at variance in several other respects. Consequently, the problem of the security of the Persian Gulf is in a very delicate state of suspension.

Balance of Power in the Middle East

The powerful role of Iran in maintaining the balance of power in the Middle East between Israel and the Arabs over the past decade was perhaps fully known only to secret strategists. Nevertheless, this should become clear even to less attentive observers when it comes down to what would

have happened to the balance of power in the Middle East if Iran had placed its full military strength behind Egypt and the Arabs in the 1973 Yom Kippur war, for example. The answer is that Israel would have been incapable of holding its own against the overwhelming military strength in this case. The shah was a pivotal figure for the forces in the Middle East in that for the most part he balanced out the Arab forces, thus indirectly easing the pressure on Israel. Henry Kissinger noted⁹ that "the shah was a source of assistance and encouragement to the forces of moderation in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. He used his own military power to ensure the security of the Persian Gulf."

The shah was of course not alone in implementing this strategy; the United States was an active partner. Moreover, whether by chance or design, events in the Middle East developed in such a way that they involved the Iranian forces in a cold war of sorts with one or another of Israel's Arab enemies, thus dividing the closed Arab ranks. Beginning in 1960 or even earlier, and continuing until the mid-1970's, it was Iraq with which Iran was in constant conflict (over control of the Shatt al Arab estuary). Iraq, a powerful enemy of Israel, felt threatened militarily by Iran and was thus unable to make its military forces available to the Arab forces to the full extent desired for a war or war of attrition against Israel. Beginning approximately in the mid-1970's, soon after the Shatt al Arab confrontations had ended, Iran entered into a bitter conflict with Libya, another of Israel's sworn enemies. The Iranian-Libyan conflict of course was confined to the political and economic arenas, but apart from a substantial psychological effect, it also influenced the Libyan initiative against Israel in a material way.

The military presence of and pressure from Iran led to a certain domination of the Arabs in the Persian Gulf. Israel furthermore found in Iran a haven of sorts for its citizens and for Jews; this was in addition to receiving desperately needed oil shipments and other indirect economic cooperation from Iran. It became known during the Iranian revolution that at least 80,000 Jews live in Iran, many of them as prosperous businessmen.

The rise of the revolutionary regime in Iran has radically changed the strategic balance in the Middle East. The Iranian regime has made it known more than once that it will actively support the Palestinians and the Arabs against Israel. The break with Libya has been patched up. In the event of the outbreak of war between Israel and the Arabs in the near future, it is highly probable that Iran will dispatch weapons and troops for the Arab struggle. However, several other important factors should not be overlooked in this regard. The Israeli-Egyptian treaty of Camp David has visibly split the Arabs and their military forces.

Iran's military strength has been greatly weakened as a result of the depletion and confusion during the revolution. The new government has further diminished the scope of the armed forces and completely set aside

various projects and plans designed to enlarge these forces and to introduce new weapons. The retrenchment includes cancellation of the F-14 aircraft, the U.S. Spruance-class destroyers and Tang-class submarines as well as the Chieftain tanks and Rapier antiaircraft missiles from Great Britain. Moreover, the military is engaged in the difficult and sensitive task of putting down internal rebellion in the provinces of Khuzistan, Kurdistan and Azerbaijan. This could become a long-drawn-out entanglement with an unforeseeable outcome. There is yet another factor that could prevent Iranian military support for the Arabs, and that is the enmity between Iran and some Arab states resulting from the differences in their religious dogmas. The substance of the religious conflict is only minor, but its emotional pull is tremendous and could be exploited by hostile powers. The Israelis are aware of this weak spot, and at that moment when they could expect a military attack by the anti-Camp David group, supported by Iran, they could take advantage of the religious problem to provoke the Iranians and Arabs into a war in which both sides would exhaust each other's military forces. A conflict of this sort -- even though auspicious for Israel -- might be extremely damaging to Western interests. Nevertheless, no matter what course events may take, the fact remains that the strategic balance in the Middle East has been seriously impaired by the Iranian situation, and that the party in a position to benefit the most from the situation will be the Soviet Union.

Defense of Perimeter Areas

Iran was considered a pivotal point in the U.S. arc of defense established by the United States against the Soviet Union stretching from the eastern borders of Europe to the western border of China. Turkey, Iran and Pakistan made up the former Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), which was planned in partnership with the United States and Great Britain for the "containment" of Soviet communism. Iran was the centerpiece holding the alliance together. It was at the same time a country favored by U.S. military strategists, who had entered into a special relationship with Iran that involved wide-ranging joint military planning. Some aspects of the secret cooperation may never be known; some others have come to the attention of the public. The existence of American monitoring installations in Iran became known during the period of revolt. Few countries are so well placed for the surveillance of Soviet civilian and military activities in space. The monitoring installations in Iran were particularly well positioned for the monitoring of Soviet missile firings during the launch phase. Accordingly, among other things they were essential in the monitoring of Soviet observance of SALT-treaty provisions insofar as they involved changes in the length, diameter and launch and payload weights of their missiles. When the overthrow of the shah became imminent, these stations were dismantled or disabled as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, because of its close connection with SALT, the issue of intercept stations was a hot topic of debate in the U.S. Senate. It was reported recently that both the secretary of state and secretary of defense are making a strong bid to reestablish the monitoring stations.¹⁰

CENTO broke up at the point when the revolutionary regime assumed power in Iran. The alliance was already weak and perhaps ripe for collapse. Its termination was possibly an insignificant event. More serious was the accompanying decline in American relations with Pakistan and Turkey, not to mention Iran. Moreover, a development such as the termination of a defense pact carries with it a perceptible psychological impact, especially when viewed in front of the present backdrop of America's pattern of yielding to the Soviets. At this critical juncture it is difficult to assess fully just how great the influence of the loss of Iran as a military outpost, intelligence base and reliable ally will be on America's worldwide struggle against the Soviet Union. There is a certain irony in the possibility that the United States Government would like even to downplay its serious break with the revolutionary regime in Iran. Nonetheless, the loss of Iran is a serious blow, and it has revealed to the world and -- what is even more important -- to the Soviet Union the vulnerability of American strength.

Buffer Between the Soviet Union and the Arabian Sea

Diplomatic history has always described Afghanistan as the classic example of a buffer state between Russia and British India. It suited British diplomats to highlight Afghanistan as a buffer state. It suited them less whenever Iran was given that label. Indeed, in the case of Iran the subject was too sensitive to be linked with an expression as neutral as the word buffer. Nevertheless, the British kept tabs on Iran as their most important buffer against the Soviet Union. The British were masters in the field of global naval strategy and clearly perceived the role that Iran would play in the blocking of any Russian access to the Arabian Sea.

Iran lay directly between Russia and the Arabian Sea, while northwestern India -- which today is Pakistan -- separated Russia from the sea only in conjunction with Afghanistan. It was therefore still possible to accept Afghanistan as an independent buffer state; Iran, however, had to remain under direct British control. The political and economic significance of the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea had been apparent long before World War II, and the British were determined to prevent the emerging Soviets from using Iran to reach the warm waters to the south of that country.

When British domination of southern Asia and the coast of the Arabian Sea came to an end in the late 1940's, the role of Afghanistan as a buffer state became equivocal. Even though the British definitely must have recognized Afghanistan's geopolitical significance, they were nevertheless not in a position to pursue an effective policy in this country following their withdrawal from India. But the Americans as well, who had followed in the footsteps of British imperialism, showed only a very limited interest in countering the growing Soviet influence in Afghanistan. To them, Afghanistan seemed not to be linked with their vital interests. Thus, they may have tacitly accepted Soviet hegemony over Afghanistan.

They held to their lukewarm policy toward this state even though they issued occasional warnings to the Soviets to stay out of Afghanistan.

But the situation was different with Iran. During World War II, the British tried every trick to keep Iran away from any possibility of German control, and later to forestall Soviet access to part of the country. They even attempted to keep the Americans out of Iran. Nevertheless, the United States took over from the fading British and revived and reintensified British imperialist policies in this region.

Iran served the United States and Western interests for nearly 30 years as a strong buffer against Soviet efforts to reach the Persian Gulf, also against further Soviet penetration into southern Asia. It may be said that the leftist-inspired rebellion in Pakistan's Baluchistan Province in 1973-74 was no great success for the reason that Iran was functioning as a barrier and deterrent to the Moscow-oriented Baluchistani leftists. Soviet strategists planned that Iran would serve as a land link between the Caspian Sea and the Arabian Sea. While the much-discussed speculative Soviet thrust toward the Arabian Sea and the Pakistani port of Gwadar would have to pass through rugged, uncharted mountainous terrain, the path through Iran would pass over well-built paved roads. The Soviets are dead set on Bandar 'Abbas, the Iranian port which overlooks the entrance to the Persian Gulf and which, moreover, provides easy access to the open Arabian Sea. During the latter part of the shah's reign, Soviet diplomacy had been able to convince him to provide transit facilities for Soviet cargoes in Bandar 'Abbas. Soviet trade via the Bandar 'Abbas sea lane was well under way by the time the shah was overthrown. It would be interesting to learn whether the transit authorization still exists or has been revoked by the new Iranian regime. If the Soviet Union is linked with the Arabian Sea via Iran, this will have unforeseeable consequences for international relations and will propel the Soviets to the pinnacle of world power. Together with India, South Yemen and Mozambique, which are already lined up with Soviet military strategy, the Indian Ocean would come under Soviet domination. We could come dangerously close to a realization of Alfred Mahan's traditional prophecy that he who controls the Indian Ocean in the 21st century will determine the history of the world.

Notwithstanding, Iran's present political situation is by no means making it easier for the Soviet Union to achieve its goal. The Iranian revolutionary leader, the Ayatollah Khomeini, has shown no love whatever for the Soviet Union. In fact, he and his supporters have every reason to be angry at the Soviets because they believe that the Soviet Union is inspiring and supporting the domestic unrest with which they are being confronted -- as was the case in Iran in the early 1940's. The ancient Islamic faith also separates the Iranian leaders from the Soviets. Nevertheless, there are other factors that would be apt to diminish the hostility between the Soviet Union and the new Iran. The leadership in Iran is strictly anti-American for a variety of reasons. It is convinced that the United States stood in the way of its struggle against the shah and that

it has thus far not agreed with the political changeover in Iran. It is further convinced that the Americans exploited Iran as a source of raw materials while simultaneously undermining Iranian culture with the evils of moral corruption and degeneracy. What is more, they are demanding extradition of the shah from the United States in order to put him on trial for his alleged crimes. Even if Iranian hostility toward the United States were to slack off, it is improbable that the present leadership could ever feel drawn to America. Its oil resources give Iran a sizable measure of freedom of action. It has many options from which to choose in shaping its future policy, but it has just as many possibilities of being overtaken by events forced upon it by revolutionary forces and/or pressure from the outside.

There are two possibilities, either one of which would be fortunate and gratifying for the Soviet Union. The regime of the Ayatollah Khomeyni might turn to a policy of accommodation and collaboration with the Soviet Union. The ayatollah's anti-American sentiments could pave the way for this possibility. The strategic assessments of his military advisers could do the rest. Iran cannot afford to feud with its powerful neighbor with whom it shares national borders totaling 1,100 miles. Iran's struggle with its leftist rebels cannot be won without some measure of understanding and assistance on the part of the Soviet Union. It would not be too difficult to arrive at that understanding. Iran is no longer a military ally of the United States. There are no foreign military advisers in the country. CENTO has fallen apart. The American ELIM installations have disappeared from Iranian soil. There is no longer any pro-American leadership. What more could the Soviet Union want from Iran? To be exact, a wide-ranging treaty of friendship and cooperation similar to those that it has concluded with about half a dozen countries surrounding the Indian Ocean, including India, Iraq and South Yemen. But the Soviets can afford to wait; they do not have to push Iran into a dramatic about-face. They will proceed cautiously and very artfully. First they might demand the resumption and expansion of land transit for shipping trade through to the Arabian Sea and rights of overflight in Iranian air space. They will be keen on expanding the reciprocal trade and economic ties that existed earlier. Now that the principal share of Iranian oil is no longer reserved for America, the Soviets -- who allegedly are on the road to becoming importers of oil beginning in 1985 (although perhaps never too dependent upon imported oil) -- might demand a share in the Iranian oil fields in order to maintain and stretch their own reserves. In return, they could withdraw their support from leftist subversion and rebellion efforts and provide certain guarantees for the survival and stability of the ayatollah's regime. On this basis a gradual strengthening and growth of reciprocal ties between Iran and the Soviet Union would be conceivable. Among other things, this would result in the extension of Soviet access to the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf.

The alternative to this is the reverse of the above situation; in other words, hostile relations between Iran and the Soviet Union. This would

come about mainly in the event that the ayatollah's regime were to show no inclination to compromise or come to terms with the Soviet Union and were to continue to fight bitterly against the communist insurrection. The emotional and psychological gulf between ideologies would be magnified. Iran's inclination to grant the Soviet Union the necessary transit privileges to its seaports would lessen, and it would show no willingness whatever to expand bilateral agreements between it and the Soviets. Soviet hostility toward Iran would not be long in coming. Another factor that could bring a Soviet-Iranian estrangement -- and even initiate it -- would be a strategic conception within the Soviet leadership circle that a stable and successfully governed Islamic Iran might possibly be injurious to the unity of the Central Asian Soviet republics, whose populations are largely Moslem. This is not implausible, since Iran is moving in the direction of exerting strong religious and social pressure on the Soviet Moslem republics by inflaming existing tendencies toward disunity and secession. And if the Iranian government should be capable of demonstrating its Islamic economic and political concepts successfully in practice, the Central Asian Moslems could be prodded into seeking their own independence and pursuing the political system of their choice. In any event, the possibility exists of a deepening rift between the Soviet Union and Iran. This circumstance would be extremely dangerous for Iran, because it would lead to active attempts by the Soviets to ruin the country. Given the collapse of Iran, the Soviets could exert almost total control over the detached northern provinces and would have the prospect of bringing the southern part of the state under its influence in order to guarantee access to the Gulf and the Arabian Sea. Thus apprehension on the part of Iran has probably taken on added weight in the wake of the Soviet action against Afghanistan.

An interesting idea in this connection is that Israel, too, would in its own interests welcome a collapse of Iran, since it would mean the breakup of Islamic military strength. For this reason, the Israelis might encourage such a situation to develop. The Israeli lobby in the United States could convince the politicians that a defeated Iran, part of which could still be brought under American influence, would be a much better thing than a united Iran which would remain fanatically anti-American and continue to permit the Soviets the use of its strategic advantages and resources. If such a possibility were to take shape -- and this conjecture is no foolish speculation -- this could be the case by the mid-1980's, a time when various experts think that American dependence upon imported oil will have declined noticeably, especially that from the Persian Gulf.

It is difficult to say with any certainty what shape the Persian Gulf region -- and even the northern waters of the Arabian Sea -- will take on in the next few years as a direct result of the changes in Iran. Nevertheless, given a continuation of the present course of events, it is inevitable that it will also be changed politically. And there is a great possibility that this altered situation would correspond to the wishes of the Soviet Union. The most significant element that could halt this trend

is a U.S. policy that would have to make a radical switch, even against Israeli interests. The community of interests between Israel and the United States is in itself an interesting subject. It is possible that Israeli and American national interests in certain areas would favor a joint strategy and policy. Nevertheless, since the fall of the shah there has apparently been a dividing line between them with reference to Iran. The national interests of the United States require a separate framework for action. Considering all the arguments, it can be said that the United States wants a friendly, stable and healthy Iran that is in harmony with the states of the Persian Gulf and western Asia.

The eyes of communism have rested covetously upon the large and small states of the Persian Gulf region. Iran's large land masses have stood in the way of the advance of communism for many decades. The communist underground in Iraq was never able to serve the purposes of the Soviet Union very effectively. The country's geographical location in a remote corner of the Persian Gulf is a handicap. Moreover, it is a small country which is generally not taken very seriously by most of its Arab neighbors, with the possible exception of tiny Kuwait. Nor has it thus far had any military or political power that would enable it to exert on its neighbors any influence whatsoever as a friend or deterrence as an enemy. If Iran were to open its doors to the Soviet Union, the entire Persian Gulf would be exposed to the slow but certain spread of communism.

Postscript

On 4 November 1979, Iranian students occupied the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took the embassy employees hostage.¹¹ They demanded the extradition to Iran of the former shah, who had sought medical treatment in the United States; he was to be put on trial before the Iranian people for the crimes of which he had been accused. The Ayatollah Khomeyni's Revolutionary Council supported this action by the students. The government of Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan fell as a result of these events. In the United States, President Carter's government refused to extradite the former shah and demanded the unconditional release of the hostages. A grave crisis began. Iran halted all oil exports to the United States -- amounting to approximately 700,000 barrels a day -- and threatened to put the hostages on trial. President Carter ordered a freeze on Iranian assets held by U.S. banks, as well as the expulsion of some of the Iranian students in the United States. In addition, he threatened possible military action against Iran.

Thus it happens that the serious strategic consequences of the Iranian revolution that this article was to outline have already begun to become a reality. The American-Iranian crisis has unleashed forces which, within not too long a time, can drastically change the strategic situation in the Persian Gulf and the northern waters of the Arabian Sea. The global aspect of this crisis can be seen in the fact that the major portion of the international community has already been directly affected by the further

development of the crisis -- chiefly Western Europe, Japan, the Soviet Union, the Middle East states as well as western and southern Asia.

The crisis in Iran had reached its peak when Soviet armed forces invaded Afghanistan on 27 December 1979. The 2-month-old regime of Afghan President Hafizullah Amin was toppled; Amin was killed. With Soviet assistance a new leader was installed as head of the government -- Babrak Karmal. The Soviet Union justified its intervention with the assertion that it had been asked for assistance by the Afghan government under the terms of the existing pact on friendship and cooperation. During the first 3 weeks following their invasion, the Soviet armed forces reached a strength of about 100,000 men, fully equipped with war materials and tanks, who went about crushing the rebellion of the Afghan freedom fighters with all their might. All indications are that the Soviets intend to remain in Afghanistan indefinitely, even though the UN General Assembly passed an unequivocal resolution on 15 January 1980 calling for the immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghan territory. Though there was a very vigorous reaction from most of the world to the Soviet military action, that of the United States was indeed particularly acute. The American president called the action the most serious event since World War II.

This writer must admit that he is somewhat surprised at the sudden about-face in American policy toward Afghanistan. Even though the Soviet action had no comparable precedent and was unusually aggressive, it was certainly apparent that the Soviets would make a move toward gaining total political control over Afghanistan after U.S. policy on that country and southern Asia had hitherto largely allowed them a free hand. If the United States had wanted to prevent the Soviets from attaining this goal, a counter-strategy would have required a steady and continuing process of establishing obstacles to a consolidation of the Soviet position in Afghanistan -- particularly once it became apparent that complete Soviet control of the country had to have serious repercussions on Western strategic interests. It could be predicted that this would bring Soviet military might closer to the banks of the Arabian Sea, that the integrity of Iran, Pakistan and India could be threatened and, above all, that the oil pipeline linking the Persian Gulf region to the Western countries could be jeopardized. It is possible that the American strategists have erred once again in their analyses. It now remains to be seen just how far the United States will go with its countermeasures to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

The events in Afghanistan have added confusion to the turmoil over Iran. The embassy crisis in Iran took on military aspects almost from the start, at the moment when the United States Government announced that a "naval task force" including the aircraft carrier "Midway" had reached the Indian Ocean. In the days that followed, the Arabian Sea became the scene of maritime activity the likes of which had never been seen before in this area. Reports from various sources indicate that by the middle of January 1980, three foreign powers -- the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom -- had dispatched a total of more than 50 ships to the

Arabian Sea, plus France's five-vessel Indian Ocean combat force that was already in place. At least 23 of these ships belong to the U.S. Navy and 10 to the Royal Navy, the rest being Soviet units. It is also assumed that the United States has meanwhile reinforced and upgraded its logistical facilities as well as its monitoring and command installations at its Diego Garcia base.

The Soviet Union has no developed Indian Ocean port for its exclusive use. But as far as the necessary support facilities for a fleet there are concerned, it also has no immediate need for them. India, whose navy consists largely of ships of Soviet construction, is a reservoir for Soviet naval logistics, and its principal seaports of Bombay, Cochin and Visakhapatnam are the main supply ports for Soviet ships -- particularly since India is allied with the Soviet Union by way of a 20-year treaty of friendship and cooperation. Aden, in South Yemen, is another important port for the Soviet fleet. In October 1979, the Soviets conducted important maneuvers in which they tested their strategic mobility with a massive airlift operation to the Middle East and Africa. It took a fleet of Antonov An-22 transport aircraft 36 hours to transport two brigades, with about 10,000 men and their armored vehicles and artillery, from southern Russia to landing areas in South Yemen and Ethiopia. The aircraft flew a course along the eastern border of Turkey, across Syria and Iraq as well as the Persian Gulf and down around the Arab peninsula -- on the whole a rather long and circuitous route. The Americans are right to be concerned about what might happen if Soviet military aircraft were able to fly directly across Iran and the Persian Gulf as well as the Arabian Sea, a route that would enable them to shorten the distance and their time in the air enormously.

Since the American naval base at Diego Garcia is relatively far from the Persian Gulf, U.S. naval planners will definitely be looking for logistical facilities closer by. While some of their former allies, like Pakistan, will probably not make the needed facilities available, other countries may be willing to cooperate with the Americans. In this category are Egypt, Israel, Somalia, Saudi Arabia and Oman. Three of them -- Oman, Egypt and Israel have already issued statements pointing to such cooperation.

Naval forces, with their inherent advantages, offer various possibilities for the use of force below the threshold of open hostilities. The Americans are already employing some of these options. Nevertheless, the use of armed forces in a deterrent role is restricted by time and place and cannot be maintained at a specific level for an indefinite period. Moreover, there is a danger that the deterrent will lose its effect if the enemy refuses to react to it. For this reason, in the event that the crisis lasts for some time and grows worse, the danger exists that the Americans will finally see themselves forced to increase the military pressure -- by blockading the Strait of Hormuz to Iranian shipping, for example. Meanwhile, given the inflexibility that the Iranians have shown,

it has to be expected that Iran will respond with an escalation of the conflict if the United States resorts to a naval blockade.

The great imponderable in a military confrontation between the United States and Iran is the reaction of the Soviet Union. Would the Soviets remain aloof or come in on the side of Iran? Much will depend upon the covert diplomacy between the two superpowers. If the Americans can offer the Soviets credible assurances that a possible military action on their part would serve the exclusive purpose of forcing the release of the hostages, the Soviets can possibly overlook those events. But if they suspect other plans on the part of the Americans -- for instance, seizure of the Iranian oil fields or a part of Iranian territory, or an overthrow of the revolutionary regime or the establishment of long-term control over the Strait of Hormus and so forth -- it is probable that the Soviets would take an active part in the conflict. Outwardly, they have already indicated that they would not stand for a naval blockade of Iran by the United States, no matter whether Iran seeks Soviet assistance or not. This was also underscored by the Soviet veto in the UN Security Council against the resolution on economic sanctions against Iran.

An alternative designed to prevent a direct intervention by the Soviet Union would be a military action against Iran carried out by a regional power acting for the United States. This would result in a localized war by proxy which would keep the superpowers from a direct confrontation; this has already happened many times in the postwar years. Saudi Arabia might be a candidate for this role, but Saudi military strength is inadequate for such a venture. Moreover, the political differences between Iran and Saudi Arabia at this time are not such that they could justify a war between the two countries in the foreseeable future. On the other hand, there are two other states capable of fulfilling this role -- Egypt and Israel, for example -- even though a fair distance from Iran. They both have sufficient military strength as well as correspondingly hostile relations with Iran. In the case of Egypt, its continuing sympathy for and support of the former shah, along with other differences, is a substantial reason for Iran's hostility. In Israel's case, adequate reasons are to be found in the Iranian regime's open declaration of an anti-Israeli policy and the dispatch of a reported 1,000 armed Iranian volunteers to Lebanon to fight at the side of the PLO. This would just about constitute the "casus belli" for Israel's military action against Iran. Moreover, Israel possesses a more than adequate military capability in relation to Iran; Israel is also closer than Egypt to the Persian Gulf and has a strong and seasoned force of paratroopers.

It is true that at the time these lines were written in mid-January 1980, there were already indications that the American-Iranian crisis was cooling off somewhat. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan probably produced this turn of events. Nevertheless, the problems have by no means been solved, and the crisis may take a new tack at any time. In any event, we

cannot yet see an end to the crisis in and around Iran and the region. The entire area of western Asia is alive with sparks that could rekindle the conflict.

The Soviets have secured for themselves a commanding position and role. American politicians appear to have let the opportunity slip from their hands to clear up the uncertainty surrounding the countries of the region and vital Western interests. Perhaps they still have a certain amount of time to repair the damage through the adoption of a realistic, deliberate and credible policy toward the two remaining countries of the region: Iran and Pakistan, which still lie outside the grip of the Soviet Union.

The effect of the Iranian revolution on the international strategic situation has been underscored by the promptness with which the Soviet Union has moved to decide the global contest in its favor. The world must recognize the significance of these events, since the Iranian revolution could be the forerunner and catalyst for all major strategic events in the new decade.

FOOTNOTES

1. David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, "The Invisible Government," Bantam Books, New York, 1965, p 116.
2. Ruhollah K. Ramazani, "Iran's Foreign Policy, 1941-1973," University Press, Virginia, United States, 1975, p 40.
3. Ibid, p 109.
4. TIME MAGAZINE, 5 February 1979.
5. NEWSWEEK INTERNATIONAL, 10 December 1979; Henry Kissinger made his remark at a conference of Republican governors in Austin, Texas, in November 1979.
6. TIME MAGAZINE, 5 February 1979.
7. Ruhollah K. Ramazani, "Iran's Foreign Policy, 1941-1973," University Press, Virginia, United States, 1975, p 43.
8. TIME MAGAZINE, 24 September 1979.
9. NEWSWEEK INTERNATIONAL, 10 December 1979; H. Kissinger, WASHINGTON POST, November 1979.
10. THE MUSLIM, Islamabad, 18 October 1979, UPI report.
11. NEWSWEEK INTERNATIONAL, 26 November 1979.

DISCUSSIONS FOCUS ON ELECTION LAW

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 24 Feb 80 p 13

[Interview with Minister of Local Government 'Abd Al-Fattah Amin Yasin by Muhammad Ma'tuq, date and place not given]

[Text] A great deal of party and governmental attention is focused on preparations for Iraq's first post-revolution election of a national assembly. The preparations include debating the draft of the proposed election law, as well as running mock elections in selected areas to test citizen reaction and establish efficient voting procedures. To learn more about the operation, we interviewed Minister of Local Government 'Abd al-Fattah Amin, Iraq's former ambassador to Lebanon. He explained the new procedures and emphasized some important changes. Among them: Iraq will subsidize each candidate's election campaign and provide equal radio and television time, as well as newspaper space for all candidates.

The minister added that there was an inclination to amend the constitution so that the president of the republic is also the chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council. The minister said further that discussions were still under way on whether or not to permit voting by members of the armed forces. The minister said that he regards confirmation of their participation as unlikely. He set election time for the first half of this year.

The minister described the proposed election law as having special features not shared by any other election law. One such feature, he said, is the government's decision to bear the cost of the election campaign. He added that the election law will provide for equal campaign subsidies to all candidates. The reason, he explained, was to eliminate the election campaign advantages of wealthier candidates. According to the minister, the move to allocate equal radio and television time was one more step in that direction.

[Question] What are your expectations regarding the number of candidates, this being the country's first post-revolution election?

[Answer] We encourage as many candidates as possible to run. We want the National Council to reflect the wishes, aspirations and free choice of the people. We want a free and democratic election so that successful candidates will be truly representative of the people's will. For this reason, we rejected the notion of selection by acclamation. The proposed election law stipulates that the number of candidates from each election district must be no less than double the number of representatives that the district is entitled to. For example, a district entitled to 5 representatives must put up at least 10 candidates. The larger the number of candidates, the greater the freedom of choice. Therefore, we are not opposed to a large number of candidates. There is, however, a stipulation, still under debate, to the effect that a candidate must receive at least 1,000 votes to qualify for keeping his government campaign subsidy. This provision is intended to discourage those who wish to run for the sake of running.

[Question] The forums, then, will maintain the same number and form?

[Answer] The districts or the forums?

[Question] The informational forums, the press and radio.

[Answer] To date, we have said nothing about the media. We will announce how the media are to be used by the candidates when the election law is adopted. What we now have is a first draft. That draft was debated at the cell level and at the highest level, i.e., at the national conference. Many suggestions and modifications were made to the draft. The draft was also discussed by trade unions and public organizations throughout the country. There were many recommendations and suggestions. We now have a new draft which will be submitted to the Revolutionary Command Council for adoption into law. When that happens, we will announce the conditions pertaining to the use of the media during the campaign.

[Question] In a recent press conference, you announced that one of the articles of the constitution which will be modified concerns the combining of the offices of president and chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council in one person. Are there other amendments?

[Answer] This point was the subject of much debate by legal experts. The fact is that this article was not included accidentally. The idea originated with the Revolutionary Command Council. As we disclosed at an earlier press conference, the suggestion that the National Assembly should be empowered to express confidence in the president came from the president himself. Of course, this suggestion would be inconsistent with the constitutional article which stipulates that the chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council must be the president of the republic ex-officio.

If the article stands as originally drafted, the question arose as to how to deal with a situation in which the National Assembly refrains from

giving the president a vote of confidence. The answer was that this being the case, the constitution should be modified so that a vote of confidence in the president becomes established law, in keeping with the spirit of democracy. The National Assembly will thus be required to express its confidence--or lack of it--in the president. The implementation of this provision will also serve as a sort of popular referendum on the president. A president who does not receive a majority vote of confidence from the elected National Assembly--which, we hope, reflects the will of the people--is not worthy of that office. In such an eventuality, the Revolutionary Command Council will have no choice but to elect a new chairman, and thus a new candidate for the office of president. The National Assembly will vote on the new candidate, and the process will continue until a candidate wins a vote of confidence.

[Question] You say in effect that it is not unconstitutional to combine the offices of president and Revolutionary Command Council chairman.

[Answer] Yes. The constitution is clear on this point. When the Revolutionary Command Council elects a chairman, that person becomes the president of the republic. The two offices are one. The only problem is that the supreme authority is vested in the Revolutionary Command Council. According to the constitution [as it now stands], the chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council is the president of the republic and there is no need for a vote of confidence by the National Council. In order to ensure that the people will have a voice in the selection of a president--and, hopefully, the vote by the National Assembly will serve that end--we shall amend the constitution.

[Question] When do you expect the election: to take place?

[Answer] We are anxious to have the elections as soon as possible. Preparing for them is not a simple task, however. There are 6 million voters scattered throughout the country: in towns, villages and desert [bedouin] settlements. We want the voting centers to be accessible to everyone. Many more centers must be established. Election day will be a national holiday to enable government and non-government employees to fulfill their civic obligation to vote. We have come a long way in our preparations. Lists of eligible voters--beginning with people born in 1962, who are now entitled to vote--have been compiled in every election district. The excellent computers in the Ministry of Planning and other government agencies were of great help in this undertaking. The entire operation was completed in 10 days. Voting ballots with provisions for the names of candidates have been readied. Committees to oversee the elections and endorse balloting returns are in place. Central committees from this ministry and others involved in the election preparations have toured all the governorates to answer questions and to explain our experience with the mock election. During the mock elections we invited all deputy governors to be on hand to observe the strengths and weaknesses of the procedure. We feel confident that the elections will take place during the first half of this year.

[Question] During the mock elections, did you actually give voters names of candidates to choose from?

[Answer] Yes. The ballots were marked with 20 fictitious names. We wanted the voters to know that the experiment was not the real thing. A person whose name accidentally appears on the ballot could then claim victory. Had we used the names of actual candidates, those whose names were used would have received advanced publicity.

[Question] Have you decided whether the armed forces will be allowed to vote?

[Answer] The new election law will settle this point. There are two schools of thought on this subject and both were heard while the draft was being readied. Members of the armed forces, as individuals, have the right to vote. The problem is in the exercise of that right. By law, each citizen must vote in the district in which he was registered in 1977. For example, if you registered in Basra in 1977 and you now work in Baghdad, then you must travel to Basra to vote. Many members of the armed forces are based very far from their election districts. We have considered a solution to this problem, but its implementation would be difficult. The idea is to present a list of the names of all candidates to each unit and to require the voting soldier to select 5 names from his district's candidates. This, of course, will delay election results. But the debate over this issue continues.

[Question] Don't you think that permitting the army to vote is a politically sensitive matter in view of the fact that only Bu'ath party members are allowed to join the armed forces?

[Answer] On the contrary. Our entire army is an ideological army. It is the army of the party. Had we wanted to give the edge to party candidates we would have insisted on the army's right to vote. We do not think that the party candidates need this advantage. I personally believe that the army's refraining from participation in the elections is a valid issue.

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RAMADAN INTERVIEWED ON POPULAR ARMY

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 8 Feb 80 p 4

[Interview with Taha Yasin Ramadan, Commander of the Popular Army, by Riyad Shaba]

[Text] On the tenth anniversary of the popular army's foundation, AL-THAWRAH has conducted an interview with Taha Yasin Ramadan, the general commander of the popular army, who has discussed the dimensions of this experience, underlining the party's evaluation of the experience as a successful and distinguished one. He has also stressed the interest of leader President Saddam Husayn in bolstering this experience in a special way. Yasin has also pointed out that building this experience has been done by benefiting from past experiences and that the army's tasks are of a pan-Arab [qawmiyah] nature and that these tasks will continue as long as we take the pan-Arab viewpoint into consideration. The general commander of the popular army has also announced that this army's formations are present in all parts of the country and that the army has entered the stage of increasing its numbers and of enhancing its combat capabilities. The commander has also discussed the popular army's role as a serious and important instrument in entrenching and spreading the revolutionary values among the strugglers. He has further discussed the issue of women's enlistment in the popular army, the issue of raising the standard of training and the capabilities of the fighters and other issues brought up during the interview. Following is the text of the interview:

[Question] We hope that you will sum up for us the most important goals sought by the revolution from the foundation of the popular army and the tasks entrusted to this army in light of the revolution's principles and of the goals of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, especially since more than 11 years have passed on the inception of the great 17 July revolution and since a lot has been achieved on the path of these principles and goals at the national, pan-Arab and international levels.

Mobilizing Masses To Defend Revolution and Principles

[Answer] The popular army is nothing but a means and a general framework for implementing the most important fundamental principles which the party adopts to enable the popular masses to exercise their rights and role and to prove their presence. This army means training and mobilizing the popular masses to defend the revolution and its gains as a serious and practical means for involving the masses in everything and in the most important thing, namely defending the principles, the goals and the gains.

Therefore, an agency had to be set up and prepared to participate in translating this goal, the goal of training and mobilizing the masses. We call this agency the popular army.

The party, as is well-known, has a long experience in this sphere, including the phase of underground struggle conducted many years ago under different names, in various dimensions and with different means connected with the nature of each of the stages of this struggle.

Insofar as the well-known experiences are concerned, there was the 1963 national guard experience. There was also more than one experience in the phase of underground struggle in training and mobilizing the party comrades and strugglers to carry arms to defend the party's goals and to confront the reactionary agencies of oppression under the defunct regimes.

As for the formation of the popular army in its legal form, and not just as a practical beginning for training and mobilizing the masses--i.e. insofar as the regular formation of this army in accordance with organizational structures is concerned, this happened on 8 February 1970. We believe that this formation is greatly different from the organizational structures of the party's previous experiences in this sphere because the present experience has relied on all those experiences as a basis. Moreover, we studied the positive and negative aspects of numerous other experiences and took into consideration the means to overcome the negative aspects and to develop the positive ones. We also benefited to a large degree from other experiences, taking into consideration the big tasks entrusted to the revolution and the major role of the masses in tasks of this size.

Furthermore, we believe that the popular army has a pan-Arab dimension and that its formations [units] that are bound to the country and are found within well-known regional boundaries perform ultimately--in addition to their regional defense tasks of defending the areas of their presence and the sensitive areas of the country--a distinct pan-Arab role because they give our valiant regular army greater opportunities to perform a bigger role at the pan-Arab level and in the fateful Arab battles. Moreover, the popular army takes part in the honor of defending the Arab revolution movement and its fighting groups whenever the pan-Arab need arises. Perhaps this army's participation in the fighting to defend Lebanon's Arabism and to confront the Zionist attacks is the best proof of this fact.

What is more, developed forms of training and mobilization have been introduced so as to enable the popular army to perform a pan-Arab role, in addition to its regional role. We thus find that the popular army has experience, though limited, in this regard.

Covering Entire Country With Formations

[Question] What is your evaluation of the popular army experience in our country, how do you view the spread and totality of the experience since it began and until the present and how do you view the future of this experience in light of the goals for which it was started and bolstered?

[Answer] We believe that the party leadership evaluates the popular army experience as a very successful experience. It is truly one of the party's genuine experiences and one that has adopted the party's thought and theory. Since assuming the official form of popular army formations 10 years ago, we find that this experience has been taking an ever-rising course, whether in terms of geographic dissemination and of the presence of these formations in the smallest administrative unit, in terms of supplying the technological equipment and requirements that play an important role in raising the capability of these popular army units and their ability to coordinate with the other sectors or in terms of raising the combat standard through constant training, through the methods adopted in the annual programs and through the types of weapons on which the popular army fighters are trained.

This is why we find that the popular army is now present in all parts of the country.

We can say that this army's presence is more concentrated in the remote areas than in nearby areas and in areas with low population density than in areas with high population density. In the border areas, it receives greater attention and is found in larger numbers than in the internal areas. All these matters have been taken into consideration so as to raise the country's combat capabilities and to fill the gaps that may be exploited, whether in border areas, in areas with low population density or in remote areas suffering from negligence in numerous other spheres.

We have even benefited from the experiences of the state and from the party's other experiences in this regard. While we find that attention is focused on the capital before other cities and on the big provincial cities before the small towns and villages, we find that the march of building the popular army started in the areas suffering from lack of attention and services and ended in the big city centers and then in the capital city of Baghdad. Thus you find that the popular army is present in all the [administrative] units. Nearly two years ago, units of the popular army covered all parts of the country, including the self-rule area. We are now in the stage of increasing the army's numerical presence and of raising the combat capability of the popular army units (and not the stage of establishing the presence of the units in areas in which they were not present before).

Popular Army and Revolutionary Values

[Question] What is the popular army's role in spreading and entrenching the new revolutionary values among the masses where the combat tasks are connected with all the tasks of the revolutionary building of society?

[Answer] As we have said in the reply to the previous question, we stress and say that the popular army experience is one of the experiences of which the party is proud. It is tantamount to action in the field that plays a major role in creating the revolutionary spirit in the souls of strugglers, especially since we know that there are negative aspects that are reflected on a revolutionary party when in power. The longer the time such a party stays in power, the more it needs to engage in genuine revolutionary actions to prevent the impact of these negative aspects and manifestations on the party strugglers. One of the most important and serious means is the popular army. This is why the party leadership decided to require all party members at all levels to join the popular army, observe its training exercises and exert efforts to expand its sphere so as to include the party masses, supporters and all the honorable citizens in this country. These things have their significant indications if we take into consideration the aspect connected with the partisans and with the party apparatus, with the penalties imposed and with the effect of all of this on evaluating every partisan within the party on the basis of the efforts that he exerts within the sphere of the popular army because the popular army is no longer an ordinary task like any other partisan task. The popular army is an original task that affects directly all the other spheres because the popular army experience reflects a revolutionary climate and conditions that are impossible to realize in the other spheres of action in the present phase of positive struggle. During the underground struggle, the strugglers used to distribute leaflets and stage demonstrations against the will of the authorities. At the time, such actions were considered important struggle actions, and were actually so. But if we consider such actions at present, we find that they are not so or, at least, they are not as important. Neither the partisan citizen nor any citizen is suffering what he used to suffer in past eras (for rebelling against the will of those governments). This is why we consider taking up training in the popular army one of the outstanding struggle actions of this phase--the phase of positive struggle. In fact, even though the single party organization itself reflects the same view of all the party members, regardless of their affiliations before joining the party and regardless of the social classes to which they belong, considering that you find the employee, the doctor, the student and the worker in the same party cell. However, in the sphere of popular army training, we find the doctor, the general director, the ministry undersecretary and the worker dressed in the same uniform and with the same appearance and tied to each other by serious struggle relations that give rank, orders and instructions no place other than their place in the struggle and no ranking other than their partisan ranking in the field, and with precise literal application. We find this embodied more strongly in the training arena than in the partisan organization itself. This is why we believe that the popular army experience is a

special struggle experience that is still raising the positive spirits of the partisans, raising their morale, developing their capabilities and eliminating many of the negative aspects and impurities that cling to the souls of the partisans and of the citizens in the period of rule [power control] and of prosperity generally, not only in Iraq but also in all countries that pass through the same conditions.

Particulars of Our Distinguished Experience

[Question] What are the most outstanding particulars distinguishing the experience of the popular army in Iraq as compared to similar experiences?

[Answer] On this occasion, we do not want to embark on evaluating other experiences. But the only thing we will say is that our experience is a special experience that is firmly connected with the party's thought, goals and regional and pan-Arab tasks. Therefore, the design of the popular army has relied on this aspect. It is certain that neither the conditions, targets or goals of the other experiences are connected with the same visualization with which our popular army experience is connected. The most important distinguishing feature we notice in our experience is the vitality of the popular army formations in terms of continued training and mobilization, of raising the combat capability, of constant movement and in terms of focusing on the original tasks for which the popular army was founded. This is why we find that this experience is continuing and intensifying, contrary to many other experiences whose similar formations have begun to turn toward service and other tasks not very strongly connected with the combat aspect for which those formations were founded at the time. Most of the similar experiences took place during phases of liberation and of fighting. When fighting ended, governments were established and regular armies were formed, the role of the popular army formations started to take a civilian aspect, a service aspect and an aspect that is nothing more than the role of the civil defense that we have--a civil defense which, we can say, is also distinguished in comparison to other countries and experiences--even though the names have not changed and even though the sizes of these formations are still large. Naturally, this does not apply to all experiences, even though it applies to most. Here, the picture is different and the popular army has been founded on the same bases from which its formations have emanated and shoulders the same tasks because our mission is continuing. If our tasks were confined to our country, we would find that the task of the popular army would begin to decline because our army is strong, and so are our people and borders, and we are capable of protecting and defending our country. If this were the case, the popular army's role would be a limited role and would actually turn into something like civil defense. But our tasks are pan-Arab tasks and this is why we find that these tasks are escalating and need more requirements.

These matters are reflected on our army, on the popular army and on every citizen, instrument and agency in this country as long as the pan-Arab viewpoint and the pan-Arab task are taken into consideration in every move and in every dealing. It is natural, therefore, to find that the situation is different in our country from the concept and the theory adopted for similar formations in other countries.

Relations With Other Experiences

[Question] We hope you will give us an idea on the nature of the relations that bind the Iraqi popular army's experience with similar world experiences.

[Answer] Since beginning formation of the popular army, especially about 5 years ago, we started efforts to establish bilateral relations with similar formations in other countries. It can be said that we have relations with most, not to say all, countries with similar experiences, such as Algeria, Cuba, the Democratic Korea, Vietnam, Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia. We don't think that we have left any sphere with similar formations that we have not probed.

There have been bilateral meetings and mutual visits and we have been directly familiarized with their experience and they with ours. We are now trying to reach the point where we have a complete study on each experience, not only on its present situation, or what we see and what we find now. But we start by asking questions, studying, inquiring and collecting information on the beginning of these experiences, their development and the point they have reached, i.e. their present situation and actions. In most cases, we find that the role, task and characteristics of these experiences are different from those of our popular army in Iraq. We will certainly benefit from all these studies, regardless of the kind of these experiences and whether they are similar to ours. We will benefit from certain aspects to avoid the possibility of a mistake that we may commit. Our experience has relied on past actions--actions that were actually ours. What I mean is that we have relied on the party's experiences in this regard and the popular army experience has continued to be based on them. This has actually enabled us to avoid most, not to say all, the negative aspects. We did not draw up theoretical and abstract experiment that is totally remote from the reality, from previous actions and from mistakes and negativities. I believe that we can notice that the citizens, especially those of the right age, can remember the national guard experience. The citizens cannot make a comparison between the [popular] army experience and the (Hanin) organization or other underground formations. But they can make a comparison with the national guard.

Perhaps some citizens imagine that the national guards were many times the popular army in numbers and that, consequently, the well-known negativities and manifestations emerged. But the fact is that the popular army is many-fold the national guard and yet the citizen feels no negativity on the part of the popular army. On the contrary, if there is a manifestation felt by

the citizen, it is a positive and not a negative one. The reason for all this is, of course, learning from past experiences and lessons, heeding the party's guidance and central leadership and benefiting from the direct interest displayed by the president 'n bolstering this experience in a special manner because it is truly an outstanding and an altogether exceptional experience. This is why it should be given special care and bolstered in a special manner.

Party's View of Women in Popular Army

[Question] What is your impression of women's role in the popular army? What does the presence of women as fighters in the popular army ranks mean, and what are the actual strides made by women in this regard and what are the future spheres for bolstering this role?

[Answer] As we have asserted on numerous occasions, we say that the popular army formation emanates from the party's view or concept of the human being and of his struggle role. The party's view of women is the same as its view of men. Therefore, when a woman has the right to organize, to become partisan and political and to engage in all social activities, then it is her right to carry the arms also. But as it is well known, there are conditions and a reality engulfing woman that curtail our ability to train, prepare and mobilize women numerically and qualitatively in the same manner as we do with men. This is why we have taken this into consideration in the form of training exercises that we adopt for women. Even in the voluntary aspect of the party, there is an aspect to the party that requires the partisans to join the popular army when it is time to join this army's formations. As for women, this enrollment is still voluntary for the same considerations. Naturally, this does not mean that the voluntary aspect of enrollment will continue forever. But so far, the command believes that we should continue it. Otherwise, the number of women fighters joining the popular army is increasing and we can say that women have joined the popular army in most of the governorates. I cannot say that the dimensions of this presence reflect our aspirations. We need greater efforts. The recent conference of area commanders urged these commanders to exert better efforts and to provide broader enlightenment and guidance through the party's organizations so that women may have a bigger role in terms of numbers and in terms of the tasks within the popular army. This is why you have found that in some sectors and total camps, we have introduced the feminine element as a complementary part of the total training given. This role will grow and develop in the future.

Deployment and Geographic Nature

[Question] How does the popular army's deployment take the question of geographic nature into consideration and what are the technological and technical conditions that have been or are realized in this regard in light of the difference in the geographic nature of the land [Sic]?

[Answer] The geographic reality is considered the easiest problem or dilemma facing the popular army. As a problem, this reality is even easier for the popular army than it is for the regular army because the primary task of the popular army units is to defend their own geographic areas. The other tasks are outside these areas. This is why we take the geographic reality into consideration in our armament, mobilization and training. When we set up a training exercise for Mandali sector, we take into consideration the fact that Mandali is a border area, that it is a flat area, that it has a river and so forth. When we set up an exercise for Khanaqin sector or for a sector of Baghdad city, we take into consideration the war of narrow streets and areas and of high population density. These are matters that have been dealt with because the popular army formations rely on geographic distribution basically.

Training on Heavy Weapons

[Question] The popular army has embarked on a new experiment with the training on heavy weapons--armors, for example--and training on air combat. What is your opinion of this experiment and what are its future horizons?

[Answer] As it is well known, the popular army's armament complements that of the regular army. But at the wish of his excellency the president--considering that it is possible for the need to arise for armor drivers and drivers in general--it is beneficial to have the popular army fighters, or some of the, trained on this type of work so that they may act as reserves when there is need for them in war. Such training may also be given on other weapons. But we have found so far that it is very beneficial to train fighters on these two kinds of weapons, considering that a fighter trained on a machinegun is the fighter trained on driving a tank also. As for the paratroopers and others, we will expand this experiment because it is fundamental for the units and for their movement from one area to another in a state of war or during a confrontation.

8494

CSO: 4802

MILITARY PAY INCREASE ANNOUNCED

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 1 Feb 80 p 6

[Article: "Revolution Command Council Decree Sets Monthly Wages of Conscripts and Recruits who Collect no Salary from State Treasury; Wages and Monthly Allowances of Enlisted Lieutenant and Permanent Lieutenant Made Equal"]

[Text] The Revolution Command Council decided yesterday to set the monthly salary of the conscript and the recruit who does not collect a salary or wages from the state treasury during the performance of the compulsory service.

The council also decided to make the salary and allowances of a conscripted lieutenant equal to those of a regular army lieutenant. Following is the text of the decree:

Decree No 164,

Date of Decree: 31 January 1980:

In reliance on paragraph (a) of article 42 of the provisional constitution, The Revolution Command Council decided the following in its session held on 31 February 1980:

1. The monthly salary of the conscript and the recruit mentioned in the appended list and not collecting a salary or wages from the state treasury during the performance of the compulsory service shall be as follows:

Rank	Diploma Holder	B.A. Holder	M.A. Holder	Ph.D. Holder
Private	35	40	45	50
Private, 1st Class	36	41	46	51
Lance Corporal	37	42	47	52
Corporal	40	45	50	55
Sergeant	43	48	53	58
Staff Sergeant	46	51	56	61

2. The salary and monthly allowances of the conscripted lieutenant shall be equal to the salary and allowances collected by the regular army lieutenant. This provision shall apply to the promotions of such a lieutenant, up to the rank of major.

3. Any provisions conflicting with the provisions of this decree shall be suspended.

4. This decree shall be issued in the Official Gazette and shall go into effect as of 6 January 1980.

Saddam Husayn
Revolution Command Council Chairman

8494
CSO: 4802

APPEAL MADE FOR ARAB RIGHTS IN AHVAZ

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 6 Feb 80 p 2

[Article by Jawad Mahmud Mustafa: "National Rights of Ahvaz Arabs and Racism of Iranian Regime"]

[Text] It is definite that the current Iranian regime, which is living in a state of floundering and chaos that pervades every mainstay of the regime and that prevails over every one of the regime's establishments, is no longer able to control or to restrain events. These words apply to the issues of the hostages of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, an issue called figuratively a problem or a crisis--as some people like to call it. In fact, this issue is no more than an act that belongs more to anarchy and anarchic action than to revolutionary actions that have firm dimensions and goals. This is due to numerous fundamental considerations, noting that this issue has served to a large degree the regime's domestic policy recently (passing the constitution and diverting the Iranian peoples' attention from what is happening in Kurdistan and Ahvaz). Moreover, this issue has not been able to rally the support and backing of the world's liberation movements and progressive regimes.

Else, how can we explain the continued flow of Iranian oil to the United States and to some West European countries that have sympathized with the U.S. position on the issue of the hostages? How can we interpret the failure to sever the diplomatic, economic and trade relations with Washington and what is the justification for the presence of U.S. experts in Iran and for the continued training of a number of Iranians in U.S. military bases? How can we understand the smuggling of a number of U.S. hostages outside Iran and the disclosure of the involvement of a number of the regime's officials in this operation? What is the justification for the lack of a programmed propaganda campaign based on a number of persuasive measures to inflame popular struggle against the U.S. imperialism and to expose its role and its plans in persecuting the Iranian peoples during the reign of the expelled shah?

In fact, we are not about to discuss the detention of the hostages which has lost its glitter and whose traces have disappeared, considering that the regime has fully exploited the results of this detention to pass its policies at home. It also seems from the statements of White House officials that matters between Tehran and Washington have returned to normal. We are about to discuss this issue only because it leads us to talking about another, and more serious issue--an issue that highlights the most outstanding racist features of the present regime. This is the issue of dealing with the non-Persian nationalities.

The chauvinistic course adopted by the regime since assuming power is no different in generalities or in particulars from the course of the former shahanshahist regime. Racist and national oppression and persecution and inhuman detention and torture are the fate of every Arab or Kurdish citizen who raises his voice to demand the abolition of these measures, termination of these actions and putting an end to the actions and conduct of Khomeyni's guard and his instruments of oppression.

Since the current regime assumed power almost a year ago, it has engaged in all forms of persecution against the Arab and Kurdish citizens. This persecution reflects the regime's failure to find common factors with the rights of the minorities and to sharpen the will and resolution of all the Iranian peoples to confront the U.S. imperialism and to build the post-shah Iran and to establish and build--and this is most important--firm and strong relations with the Arab nationalism, the fundamental mainstay of Islam and its sole support. Arabism is Islam and the relationship between the two is a lasting organic relationship. However, the statements and actions of a number of ayatollahs, some of whom are in the decision-making circle, have created a state of caution, apprehension and of casting doubts on the intentions of the ayatollahs regarding the Arab citizens in the Ahvaz areas and in the Arab Gulf countries and, fundamentally, in Iraq--the eastern gate to the Arab homeland.

The procedural and superficial departure of the Iranian forces from the Sultanate of Oman after the shah's ouster was only meant as an attempt to lure others to fall into the snares of the regime's policy, considering that the general inclination of the regime has continued to be characterized by hostility toward the Arab nation. This hostility has been embodied in a number of statements and actions, including the Iranian regime's insistence on keeping its forces in the three Arab islands under the slogan of actual occupation. How can the Arab people forget this issue with all the grief and pain it evokes in the Arab soul throughout the Arab homeland?

We wonder, is it not a painful coincidence that the Zionist enemy is lashing the Arab citizens in the occupied Palestine with the whips of persecution and torture, that this enemy is continuing its attacks against the Arab citizens in southern Lebanon and that this enemy is mobilizing its forces and war machine to threaten the Arab nation while Khomeyni's authorities and guard continue to march over the bodies of the Arabs of Ahvaz at the same time?!

The acts of oppression, persecution, deportation and detention to which the Arab citizens in the Ahvaz areas and the other national minorities are exposed--especially the prominent men of religion, such as Arab religious authority Shaykh Muhammad Tahir Al Shibr al-Khaqani--will only intensify the flame of the courageous uprising of the Arab citizens in these areas.

Isn't it better for Khomeyni's authorities--after they learn where to put their feet on the Iranian arena--to work to strengthen the ties of the historical relationship with the Arab nation and to prove their goodwill by transferring the battle into its real theater so as to confront Zionism, the U.S. imperialism and the alliance that the two have established with al-Sadat's regime?

Isn't it also better to view the rights of the national minorities from a humane and historical angle and to grant these minorities their cultural and human rights?

These will continue to be major and fundamental tasks, in addition to the other major tasks that are awaiting somebody to carry out and accomplish them, to set matters aright and to restore stability to the post-shah Iran.

8494

CSO: 4802

HOUSING CONSTRUCTION TO BE ACCELERATED

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 28 Feb 80 p 7

[Article: "Work Starts on 31,000 Housing Units; Services to be Offered to 40,000 Other Units"]

[Text] The director of the State Housing Organization, Mr 'Abd al-Muttalib Ahmad, announced that his organization's plans for the current year include the construction of 31,576 housing units throughout the country. He added that the plans include extending municipal services to 40,965 other units. In addition, the director disclosed that his organization will build auxiliary plants for the manufacture of primary building materials for prefabricated housing units. These will include windows, steel reinforcing nets [for concrete work], insulating materials, electrical systems and others.

The State Housing Organization plans to erect 8,544 housing units in the northern governorates. Municipal services will also be extended to 8,804 units in that area, of which 1,224 are located in Dahuk, 3,919 in Nineveh, 1,157 in Irbil, 372 in al-Sulaymaniyah and 1,872 in al-Ta'mim.

Construction in the southern governorates will total 4,154 units. Municipal services will be extended to 5,816 units distributed as follows: 300 in al-Muthanna, 204 in Dhi Qar, 1,018 in Maysan and 2,012 in al-Basrah.

Construction in the central governorates will total 18,878 units. Services will be extended to 24,545 units distributed as follows: 135 in Diyala, 113,473 [as published] in Baghdad, 144 in al-Anbar, 1,136 in al-Najaf, 964 in Karbala', 392 in Wasit, 156 in Salah-al-Din, 1,828 in Babylon and 350 in al-Qadisiyah. The director further disclosed that work is progressing on 3,000 apartments in Zayyunah and al-Saydiyah. Some of these apartments will, hopefully, be ready for occupancy this year by those who have signed up for them.

9063

CSO: 4802

BRIEFS

PALESTINIAN ARMS FINANCING--AL-YAMAMAH learned from informed Palestinian sources in Beirut that Iraq had paid for a shipment of T-34 tanks for use by the Palestine Resistance Movement. The tanks, recently delivered in Syria, came from Hungary via the Soviet Union. The sources disclosed further that Iraq, which has initiated strong relations with Fatah, has expressed willingness to finance that organization's arms purchases and defray the expenses of the Palestine Liberation Army. The same sources also confirmed that Iraq has closed the office of Naji 'Alushi--leader of a Fatah splinter group--and ordered him to leave the country. He is expected to go to Libya. [Text] [Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic 7 Mar 80 p 4] 9063

CSO: 4802

PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT REVIEWED

Tel Aviv HATZOFEH in Hebrew 27 Feb 80 p 2

[Editorial: "Another Building Block in the Structure of Peace"]

[Text] The ceremonies involving the exchange of credentials between the ambassadors of Israel and Egypt are events which certainly represent a historic landmark on the long road towards peace between the two nations. The speeches were impressive, and the presidents and ambassadors spoke of the importance of the gathering. President Yitzhak Navon said: "Today the chapter of hatred ends and a new chapter of prosperity and of peace begins." President Anwar Sadat said the following: "Today an essential building block for peace has been laid down."

The actual event, however, did not seem very unusual and came across as almost routine. This is not to belittle its importance or its meaning, but, rather, to demonstrate that relations between the two nations have reached the point where exchange of ambassadors was a natural and understandable step. Even the negative reactions from the Arab world, including the so-called moderate nations, did not exceed the bounds of flowery language, as though they had to fulfill their obligations. It is known that Arab leaders have made peace with the fact that Egypt is following the course that began with President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and that it will not be diverted from that course by the united opposition of the Arab world. The latter are hoping that the process will run into obstacles along the way but have given up trying to interfere at this stage.

The day of the ambassador exchanges is a very significant time in the relationship between Israel and the largest Arab country after 30 years of hatred, wars, and bloodshed. Since the Camp David agreements, there have been ups and downs in the negotiations and more than once it looked like the stage of ambassador exchange would not take place by the date set, February 26. Now a chapter in the peace process has been completed, but the rest of the road to normalization of relations between the two countries is still difficult.

Today the autonomy talks will get started again in Holland between Interior Minister Dr. Yosef Burg, Egyptian Prime Minister Mustafa Khalil, and special U.S. representative, Sol Linowitz. They are now getting down to the substantive issues of autonomy in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip after getting through some of the technical and procedural matters. According to the agreements at Camp David, these discussions are to be completed by the end of May, but it is difficult to imagine that in such a short time, the parties will be able to overcome their basic differences of opinion in this complex area. Although Israeli and Egyptian leaders expressed their hopes yesterday that the autonomy talks would be completed by the time set, it would be a considerable accomplishment if they succeeded in overcoming even a portion of the basic problems by the end of May. And as Prime Minister Begin said yesterday, there are difficulties because we have reached the stage of the knottiest questions.

The exchange of ambassadors between Israel and Egypt represents an important landmark in relations between the two countries and closes a chapter in the process of normalization after 30 years of hatred and wars. The remainder of the road to peace, however, is still rough and tortuous, and the problem of autonomy in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip is still paved with snares and complications. With the reopening of the autonomy talks today in Holland, the question of the administrative council in the occupied territories will be on the agenda. Egypt is proposing that it be a legislative body, and this is a sharp departure from what was decided at Camp David. With full understanding of the pressures on Egypt to prove to the Arab world its devotion to solving the Palestinian problem, Israel cannot accept a deviation from the Camp David agreements which are the basis for the entire peace process. Israel has stood by all the clauses of the agreement down to the last detail. Egypt must do the same.

9348

CSO: 4805

U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONS REASSESSED FOLLOWING SECURITY COUNCIL CENSURE OF ISRAEL

Tel Aviv HATZOFEH in Hebrew 4 Mar 80 p 2

[Editorial: "With Courage and Discretion"]

[Text] The Government will consider today in its weekly session the resolution in the Security Council against Israel which the U.S. ambassador took part in. Its seriousness lies in helping the motion put forth by Jordan and Morocco who are opposed to the Egyptian-Israeli agreement. What it means is that the U.S. preferred to be identified with the censure of the settlements rather than risk a foul-up in the autonomy talks. The enthusiastic declaration of Egypt in favor of the decision attests to the fact that there is full agreement between Washington and Cairo about this issue. It should be added that the resolution does not relate only to stopping the settlement of Israelis in the occupied territories, but adds that "Israel is requested to dismantle already existing settlements, including Jerusalem." This extreme version, which would mean a new division of Jerusalem and the dismantling of new neighborhoods in the eastern part of the city, was accepted unanimously, the U.S. included.

The American ambassador, Donald McHenry, who is himself completely pro-Arab, and who had just returned from a trip to the region, presumably acted on orders from President Carter. Despite the fact that Carter is in the middle of a presidential campaign, he decided to take an unequivocal stand against the settlements and against a unified Jerusalem. His position is understandable as a response to pressures from the Arab oil-producing countries, Saudi Arabia at their head, and as a gesture to the Moslem countries who are working for the return of Jerusalem to Arab-Moslem rule. He sees this as a means of getting closer to these countries in the contest with the Soviet Union.

He is surely not making light of his Jewish supporters or of their contributions to his campaign fund. But he apparently believes that Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman's vocal endorsement of him as a candidate will help him with the Jewish community. His staff have no doubt told him that in Israel itself the opposition has been making statements opposing the settlement policy and that within the Government itself there are ministers who are not enthused about it, especially about the return of Jews to Hebron.

He has also assumed that there was opposition within the Jewish organizations to Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

According to sources, spokesmen for these organizations reacted strongly to the U.S. vote for the censure. They see in it a belittling of Israel and a siding with the Arabs as well as a lack of consideration for the opinions of U.S. Jews who generally vote in the elections for the Democratic candidate.

A spokesman for the American State Department reinforced the U.S. participation in the censure by saying that the Government totally supports the vote by the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. His position agreed with that of the White House. At the same time, he said that the vote would not affect Israel's relationship with the U.S. and that they would continue as usual. The problem of the existing settlements and of Jerusalem would be subjects for discussion between Israel and Egypt with the participation of the U.S.

The U.N. resolution against the settlements, including the evacuation of existing settlements in the occupied territories and also in Jerusalem, represents a serious political blow to Israel even if the evacuation is said to be a matter for discussion. Israeli ambassador to the U.S. Evron pointed out in his meeting with Vice-President Mondale that the action taken by the U.S. brings into question the viability of the U.S. as a mediator in the talks between Egypt and Israel on autonomy. It should be noted that in the most recent talks in the Hague, U.S. representative Sol Linowitz set forth a more pro-Egyptian position than the Egyptians themselves.

The Israeli Government, whose policy is in favor of settlement in the occupied territories, and which sees no contradiction in this with either international law or the Camp David agreements, will no doubt dismiss the U.S. position in the U.N. as a concession to the pressures of the Arab oil-producing countries who want to endanger the very existence of the State of Israel. The settlement policy is based entirely on defense needs. As for a united Jerusalem in which there has been religious renewal and an attitude of respect for all the religions, whoever argues against its position as capital of Israel attacks the very existence of the State of Israel.

The relationship between Israel and the U.S. is based on many years of friendship and vital interests on both sides. Its continuation is essential even after the American vote at the U.N. A long-standing conflict of positions exists, and Carter has made pro-Palestinian statements before which were not far at all from the avowed position of the PLO. The President of the U.S. also makes pro-Israeli statements like the one he made a week ago at a fund-raising drive in Washington. He is operating according to his assessment of the power situation in leaning towards the Arabs because he believes that their political and economic weight is greater than that of Israel.

Apparently, Carter is confident about winning the elections even without a majority of the Jewish vote. But when the American Jewish leadership comes out in full force for Israel with the backing of Israel's friends in Congress and in the general public, there is a good chance that the government will soften its position as it has done many times in the past. It is fair to assume that the U.S. Government does not want a direct confrontation with Israel nor does it want a breakdown in the relationship between it and the American Jewish community.

The Prime Minister of Israel has told the president of the U.S. and his aides several times that relinquishing the settlements in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip would bring a Palestinian State run by the PLO closer to realization. The latter have gone back to calling for "an end to the Zionist occupation of Palestine." Essentially, there is a settlement policy and there is flexibility in carrying it out according to existing conditions. It would be best to do so with less publicity and with more practical purposefulness.

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CSO: 4805

GREATER INDEPENDENCE FROM UNITED STATES, CONTINUED SETTLEMENTS CHAMPIONED

Bonn DIE WELT in German 12 Mar 80 p 7

[Interview with Yitzhaq Shamir, foreign minister, by Ephraim Lahav; ~~name~~ and place not given: "We Want To Be More Independent of the United States and Continue Our Settlement Policy"]

[Text] Yesterday Yitzhaq Shamir (64) was appointed Israel's foreign minister. The former president of the Knesset succeeds Moshe Dayan who, last October, resigned his office due to political differences with the Cabinet. Until the state of Israel was established in 1948 Shamir, a member of Prime Minister Begin's Herut Party, was one of the three leaders of the feared Stern Group. This underground organization (which included some Arabs also) fought the British mandatory power in what was then Palestine. Shamir, born in Poland, is silent about his work in the underground. A code of honor obligates all former fighters to maintain discretion. In an interview with DIE WELT Shamir spoke on topical political issues.

[Question] How should Israel which proclaims itself part of the free world, behave on the international scene?

[Answer] I would like to lessen Israel's dependence on the United States. The present state of affairs is bad for both parties. The West is very sure of us; the Arabs are able to maneuver; only we have no choice. That is our vital problem, that is why we are disparaged. Cynics in the West believe that they must win the hearts of the Arabs. No effort is made to win our hearts, the West believes it is free to say anything to us.

[Question] You abstained at the crucial vote in the Knesset on the Camp David Agreement--which is the basis of the peace treaty with Egypt. Vice Premier Yigael Yadin publicly doubted that you will be able to carry out the government's peace policy. Do you now regret your abstention?

[Answer] I stand pat on anything I said or did. I was then and now am a definite advocate of the peace with Egypt. That is a matter of vital interest

to us. I did not vote for it because I rejected some of the conditions, especially the total return to the prewar frontier. I opposed the creation of such a precedent.

[Question] Did you not think that, in your capacity of deputy, it was your duty to make a decision instead of remaining neutral?

[Answer] Abstention is not neutrality. It is another way of voting, the reflection of an attitude rather than evasion. The late Yigal Allon (Labor Party) also abstained on that occasion.

[Question] What is your attitude to the hotly disputed question of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories?

[Answer] The attempt to push us back into our prewar frontiers represents a mortal danger for us. Every kilometer is important for us. Two weeks ago I visited some settlements. They are all so close by, virtually on our palm, just 20 minutes by car from here. It gives one furiously to think. And it matters a great deal indeed whether Israelis reside in this strip of land or not.

Of course this involves the problem of a million Arabs who do not wish to live under our rule. That is a problem, and I admit it. But this is precisely why Begin proposed autonomy, so that the Arabs may more easily resign themselves to the thought that we will not ever leave these territories again. After some years of togetherness they may well look at matters in a different way. Possibly we also will look at them differently.

That is the compromise. But to suggest that we should forego any Israeli presence in the occupied territories? That would mean giving up something absolutely vital. Moreover, it would mean the establishment of a Palestinian state. The establishment of settlements is the sole means of preventing this dual danger. It seems that this is not properly appreciated abroad. Maybe we are not explaining ourselves well.

[Question] You are justifying the settlements on grounds of national security. But according to the government resolution the Jewish right to settlements is also based on ideology.

[Answer] That is true. But we are prepared to compromise. And autonomy is just such a compromise. I claim that we may even have a right to the territory of present-day Jordan. We are renouncing that.

[Question] Opinions differ about the term "Eretz Israel" for the territory of which Israel claims the right to settlement. Once upon a time the "land of Israel" actually included present-day Syria. Where do you draw the line?

[Answer] Of course at various times we had different frontiers. But when we now speak of the "land of Israel" we mean no more than a minimum, that is

the geographical entity which is formed by the Western part of the formerly British ruled Palestine.

[Question] Even now, when such heavy pressure is exerted from all over the world, do you advocate the actual exercise of the right of settlement in Arab localities, such as Israel claims for itself?

[Answer] True, international pressure is currently reflected in a campaign against the settlements, but that is not its real purpose. Should the Arabs be successful in this instance, they will continue to press the matter of Jerusalem. And should they succeed there, they will find another objective. There is no lack of issues and, for obvious reasons, I am disinclined to list them all. We may give up some of our rights, but in no circumstances whatsoever will we yield our presence.

On the other hand it is a pragmatic issue how our right to settlement is translated into action. In certain possible political circumstances we may refrain. Principles do not extend to methods and tactics. Every human being, every state must act flexibly although it must remain faithful to certain principles.

[Question] Considering the past, what is your attitude to Germany?

[Answer] That which the Germans did in World War II still affects us. In other words, had the holocaust not happened our situation would be totally different. The millions of murdered people and their descendants are lacking to this day. This involves a certain obligation for Germany.

On the other hand Germany is now a democratic state and one of the most important countries in Western Europe. Basically international contacts do not represent mutual expressions of sympathy but mutual interests. We should, as far as possible, find common interests, common ground and cooperation.

I often meet with Germans and try to explain my attitude. I did this last year when a Bundestag delegation, led by the present Federal President Carstens, visited here. I talked to him, especially about the Federal Republic's responsibility--at the present time also. Carstens agreed with me and appeared impressed. Recently a CDU/CSU deputy who had been a member of the Carstens delegation returned to Israel and reminded me of what I said then. We have many friends in Germany and should nurture this friendship.

Our Likud bloc cooperates with like-minded groups in the Bundestag. Prime Minister Begin also receives German personalities. There is no obstacle to links with Germany.

I was invited to visit the Federal Republic next June. As I am no longer Knesset chairman, I expect my successor will go instead of me.

CALL FOR CONCILIATION WITHIN NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY

Tel Aviv HATZOFEH in Hebrew 22 Feb 80 p 2

[Editorial: "Domestic Peace"]

[Text] For a long time, the image of the National Religious Party (NRP) has been that of a party in which relationships were good at the top echelons as well as down the line. While there were conflicts in Likud, disintegration in DMC (Democratic Movement for Change) and subversiveness in Alinment which provided headlines and background stories and gossip for the media, the NRP, with its substantive public activity, came across as a central pillar in the Government coalition. It was seen as a party which was resourceful and active, offering solutions to complex problems, and here and there demonstrating patience towards the pretentiousness of those who were demanding more than they deserved.

Among the coalition members, the NRP stood out in terms of its stability, its approach to matters of state, and its involvement in political and economic matters. This was in addition to its distinctive representation in religious and social matters. The NRP has been a primary, not a secondary partner in the coalition. It has been responsible for everything, not merely producing agreement on religious matters.

The status of the NRP is known through the standing of its ministers of Interior and the Police, the head of the delegation of ministers dealing with autonomy, the Office of Education and Culture, the Office of Religions, members of important committees and representatives on the economic cabinet.

The public saw the National Religious Party as having a broad political character with the Torah (Pentateuch) as its ideological platform. Some extreme secular circles began to mount attacks in an agitated way on the Minister of Education and Culture before he had even done anything, as though fearing a regime of religious coercion in education, on radio and on television. Over the course of time, there have been positive changes, a better dovetailing of Jewish values with the curriculum, a curbing of the leftist leanings of the broadcasting services and the like. This was an orderly process, without fear of artificial coercion.

The NRP had a substantial role in the formulation of the settlement policy in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. The implementation of this fundamental policy must take place with careful deliberation. The party's followers are familiar with the Israeli time-table for autonomy, since it was their advice which helped in solving the transfer from Elon-Moreh to Mt Kabir, a transfer fraught with many difficulties. The opposition waited hour after hour for a Government crisis. The NRP gave advice and assistance by shifting personnel in the Treasury Department and by an extensive and continuing effort to curb inflation.

By way of an interim summary, accomplishments should be noted as well as plans that are yet to be applied. There is still a great distance between what exists and what is wanted. The NRP's representation in Parliament and in the Government, however, has performed efficiently, by working as a team and by adhering to the essential issues.

The argument that broke out recently among the factions of the NRP was caused, as usual, by controversial issues among the Lamifneh, Youth, and Likud-Temurah factions. In such a large and varied party, there were and are differences of opinion, differences in values and efforts for personal advancement in the leadership echelons. What is demanded, what the honor of the party requires, is to refrain from leaks of information and from publicity which, in part, consists of severe personal attacks. This does not represent moralizing from above, but, rather, a thorough assessment of the situation. The factions need each other to carry out a functioning administration, an active representation. In times of divergences of opinion and struggles over positions, they must keep from destroying each other.

In the past, there were periods of conflict set against a personal and factional background, as sometimes happens in parties at a time of total obscurity. They overcame those conflicts partially. One guard leaves, another enters, and, under normal circumstances, there is a blending of the old guard with the younger generation. This is a cycle of leadership and representation which, with an exact balance, is capable of sustaining itself normally, in accord with qualifications and experience and without unnecessary deflections. Responsible leadership involves not only conquest and repulsion but also yielding and compromise. No matter what its size may be, a faction is, after all, only a part of the party and not the whole party. This is where the job of the mediating forces in each faction comes in to choose a suitable solution over a sharp dispute. At the door of every conflict lies a solution, and one must bend down a little to pick it up.

The National Religious Party is vitally necessary for the nation and the State. Its part in the founding of the State, in building and defending it, its struggles concerning the essential tie between Judaism and the State, and its considerable activity in education and in settlements--are all part of an undertaking of historic dimensions. This is a unique party in the

Jewish nation and goes beyond a political party. It is a movement which encompasses a total Judaism of all Jews without exception, and the building of a Jewish State in Israel. In its system of traditional marriage laws, the Jewish religion has tied the structure of the family and the nation to the State of Israel, and has solidified the unity of the Jewish people. Now it wants to deal with the issue of who is a Jew by adding conversion according to tradition to the Law of Return. This is an important addition which will close a loophole through which false converts with civilian or reform registration might infiltrate. The unity of the people of Israel and their uniqueness are one and the same.

Religious education, a huge undertaking whose spiritual power can be seen in a generation of learned, God-fearing people who are the pioneers of settlements and are among the best citizens in the country, was brought about by the struggles and creativity of the NRP. Education has given a present and a future to Judaism in Israel, and there is a real possibility that the State will be Jewish because of its existence and its rules.

Recently, the chairman of the Labor Party boasted that he is expecting his party to receive the majority in the upcoming elections, and that he would be willing to include the NRP in his government, but would not give them the Office of Education and Culture. He would put off the issue of adding to traditional conversion, and would revoke paragraph five of the Abortion Law. He is also against settlement in Judea and Samaria. Counting his chickens before they hatch, two years before the elections, he is promising his constituents that "he will not renew a government of clericalism and chauvinism."

After the upcoming elections, we will know exactly what the Labor Party's position is compared to other parties. What is certain is that the NRP has the power to turn this threat into empty rhetoric. It is no secret that even among factions of Likud, especially the liberal faction, the NRP has enemies who want to see the next government less dependent on it. In the organizing that is going on from left to right, the ongoing concern is how to have a government without the NRP. There have even been proposals to find a way to bring about a coalition between Alinment and Likud in order not to have to turn to the NRP. This is the evil spirit of full-blown secularism which is plotting to reduce the status of the party which is responsible for the State being a Jewish State in essential areas of its existence.

Those responsible for this party's leadership and representation must not speak their minds at the moment, for an argument is likely to ruin its public campaigns and its great works, and would be a damaging blow to Judaism and to the State.

Not only this. They must also avoid internal strife which would be a negative damaging factor. The party must strengthen itself by selecting the best of its men, without examining whether or not they belong to certain

factions or to the ranks of the leadership, and to fit them into a functioning system in the areas of organizing and publicity, in missions and in construction. A big, united, visionary and active NRP would be capable of bringing about a social-spiritual revolution which is as necessary as air for breathing. The Jewish alternative to secularism in all its forms which will remove Israeli society from the dunghill of egotism, materialism and permissiveness, is awaiting the initiative of the national religious movement and the activism of a circle of people of Biblical learning and spiritual substance.

Thousands of members and admirers of the NRP have been shocked as they read and hear about the conflict in a branch of the party and see the various published articles which make no attempt to minimize or dismiss it at a time when the National Religious Party is being called upon to implement essential goals of the State and the nation.

Representatives of the party and of its factions must use all their abilities to expand its ranks, to strengthen its projects, to deepen its contents, and to make it a leading party in the State. The right forces exist for such a struggle. Lots of work is needed without hurting one another.

As long as the trouble has not reached the rank and file, the general public must call for a stop to the disgraceful publicity which is no more than self-deprecation, and to call an emergency meeting of the heads of the movement in order to remove those causing the conflict. There exist positive impartial forces which are capable of stopping this mud-slinging, of restoring temperance, and of acting quickly and decisively to bring about domestic peace. "The world exists for the sake of the one who restrains himself during a time of contention."

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PRICE DROP ON STOCK EXCHANGE CAUSED BY NEW ECONOMIC MEASURES

Tel Aviv HATZOFEH in Hebrew 27 Feb 80 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text] Yesterday the Stock Exchange witnessed a steep decline reminiscent of the one that took place over two years ago. As then, the drop came after an extended and consistent rise in stock prices. Many investors lost, in two days, profits that had been accumulating for months.

There is no doubt that the source of the wave of sales that took place yesterday at the Stock Exchange, and which brought steep drops in the prices of stocks--some as much as 30 percent--was the confusion and uncertainty surrounding the new economic measures and fears about additional measures. A step such as the exchange of the pound for the shekel, which was seen mainly as having psychological significance, had the immediate psychological effect of producing shock and uncertainty. Coupled with steps such as requiring the reporting of interest, having to submit an affidavit of capital, and limiting possession of dollars to \$500 in cash, increased the confusion. The fact that these measures do not have far-reaching significance, and that they are directed primarily at the black market which has nothing to do with the vast majority of the people, did not dispel an atmosphere of fearfulness. Several spokesman for the opposition and some of the media added to the nervousness by blowing the new economic measures out of proportion, and by attributing to them things that did not belong to them. This added to the public's confusion.

Although yesterday's drop in the Stock Exchange is clearly tied to the new economic measures, it should not be seen as a precise indicator of other sectors of economic activity. In recent weeks, there have been steep increases in the prices of the majority of stocks on the Exchange, and it was to be expected that profit-taking would soon take place. The new economic measures have served to accelerate this process which has taken place in a drastic way. It should also be remembered that what happens in the Exchange is not necessarily the sum total of the tendencies of the broad base of investors, but is determined, to a large extent, by central tendencies which rule the market. There are many indications that the panic was generated with the help of specific factions which wanted to take

advantage of the confusion of the investing public to pocket profits. When such an atmosphere is created, small investors hurry to sell securities indiscriminately, even when it makes no logical economic sense.

Hopefully, the clear announcement of Treasury Minister Yigal Hurvitz, who said last night that the Government would not touch the stocks or the bonds and would encourage the activity of the Exchange, will bring about a sobering of investors. Till now the public has trusted Minister Hurvitz's statements, and, hopefully, this will be the case now as well. Normal stable activity on the Exchange is especially important during a period of efforts to curb inflation, for it serves as a valuable tool in providing funds for many sectors of the economy, and as a means of soaking funds out of the money market, instead of channeling them into consumption which only speeds up the inflationary process.

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LEGISLATION AGAINST FRAUD IN JEWISH DIETARY LAWS URGED

Tel Aviv HATZOFEH in Hebrew 4 Mar 80 p 2

[Editorial: "Preventing Fraud in Jewish Dietary Laws"]

[Text] The Chief Rabbinical Council has called on the Government to speed up legislation in Parliament against fraud in Jewish dietary laws (Kashruth), to consider it, and, after refining and revising it, to enact it. With coalition agreement, there is a [bill] which legislates against fraud in matters of Kashruth.

The Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren has urged speedy enactment of the law in the face of the depressing reality that many butcher shops and restaurants, which call themselves kosher, operate without supervision. There is no question that in some cases it is a matter of intentional deception. They mix non-kosher ingredients in with their food.

As early as 15 years ago, a law concerning Kashruth was proposed to prevent fraud or severe offense to the sensibilities of the majority of Jews who are very conscientious about Kashruth, including tourists. There is a difference between adulteration of commodities, which can be tested in a laboratory or by some similar process, and Kashruth, which does not lend itself to proof in a concrete material sense. A special law is needed, therefore, which relies on objective external data.

According to the bill, owners of restaurants and butcher shops, slaughterers and merchants, who display a kosher sign on their businesses when this is not true, are considered to have deceived the public. The bill requires that they get a certificate from the main Rabbinical Council or from the town rabbi which confirms that the place is kosher and under constant supervision. This bill was brought up in Parliament and there were relevant and irrelevant protests about several of its sections. The decision was halted in the middle. Now the bill has been revised properly and is likely to be passed by a majority of the Parliament.

Since the Chief Rabbinate believes that there have been delays in presenting and passing this bill in Parliament, religious representatives in the Government and in Parliament will speed up the legislative process in order to enact the bill and to get it working properly.

The time has come to stop procrastinating and to act speedily to pass a law to prevent fraud in Kashruth.

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EFFORTS TOWARD NATIONAL RECONCILIATION DISCUSSED

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 29 Feb 80 pp 6-7

[Article: "The Edouard Heriot Style Entente: Sarkis's Problem: He Favors Unity but Leads a Base Saturated with Notions of Decentralization"]

[Text] Everything the Lebanese people agree about is ambiguous, and everything they disagree about is clear. They are in agreement about the entente itself, and they are in agreement about Lebanon, about its existence, its unity, its independence and its democracy. But they disagree about everything else. This includes political and administrative formulae as well as internal, Arab and international trends. This is what the president of the republic sensed in the talks he held with the different parties. He found that a more sound course [to pursue] was that of proceeding to achieve the entente gradually, from accepting vague generalities to dealing with the clear details piecemeal.

When the subject of European unity was proposed in the fifties, the patriarch of the French Parliament, Edouard Heriot opposed it by saying, "Beware of talking about unity! Nothing will divide Europe like unity and unity schemes. Unite [the countries] if you want, but do so without talking about unity by name."

Had we had a Lebanese Heriot in our country, he would have said, "Beware of talking about an entente. Nothing turns the Lebanese away from each other like an entente and its schemes. Bring about some accord if you can and wherever you can, but do not talk too much about an entente."

The entente was in fact semi-existent on the eve of the talks about it. The entente existed in the form of an unprecedented, national mourning that took place as a result of the passing away of al-Shaykh Bahij Taqiy al-Din. Suddenly, a united Lebanon that needed no formula emerged; the values that the Lebanese unanimously appreciate became defined; the hidden yearning in the heart of every Lebanese citizen for the Lebanon of the past was revealed; and events that were intent upon the destruction of Lebanon occurred.

It is the small size of this small country that has turned it into one that loves major roles and prominent men. No sooner was Lebanon's minister of Interior Affairs deceased, than the rich and brilliant life of the man flashed like a film in front of the Lebanese people. Bahij Taqiy al-Din was the young student who participated in student movements and national demonstrations; Bahij Taqiy al-Din was the attorney who filled the court-rooms to capacity whenever he argued a case; Bahij Taqiy al-Din was the deputy who smoothed with magic the dismissal of parliament in Lebanon; it is this Bahij Taqiy al-Din whose death made the Lebanese express all the nostalgia they bore in their hearts for the beautiful, golden past.

The entente was manifested in the personal visit that the president made to the home of the deceased in Ba'qalayn where he offered his condolences to the family and to relatives. It was manifested in the eulogies and the words of admiration that were spoken by Camille Sham'un and Pierre al-Jumayyil; it was evident in the fact that the successive heads and leaders of government had participated in the funeral; and, most importantly, it was evident in the people's universal mourning and in the loyalty that was demonstrated by the presidency in its announcement of a national funeral and its declaration of three official days of mourning.

The picture changed as soon as newspaper headlines appeared stating that the entente talks had begun. Heriot's theory which calls for one thing and warns against using its name was proven.

Everyone in Lebanon supports the entente until its course is set. At that time the conflicting wills and the malicious interests emerge; the map of ambitions, quotas and sensitivities is sketched; and movement is undertaken in the game of nations. Suddenly, the Lebanese question becomes a reflection of the questions of all the countries: those who are near and those who are far. And suddenly, the word Lebanon becomes simultaneously synonymous to Palestine, Syria, Iraq, the Gulf, Iran, Afghanistan, the Soviet Union, the United States and France. The statement by [the Arab poet] Abu al-'Ala' that "It is not beyond the power of God to join all in one" becomes then true of Lebanon.

President Sarkis has been one of the first Lebanese to deal with the entente without clamor. He knows quite well that arguing that national unity was imminent may cause harm and may not be beneficial. Therefore, we have always found him to be the patient investigator, looking for what is possible and not for what is impossible.

The question is this: Is there something that can take place on the scene of entente, or is this merely one round in a group of rounds that have all led to failure?

Minister of Finance Dr 'Ali al-Khalil, who is a progressive politician with the stature of a statesman, has advocated more than once that the ground be secured before any step is taken. It was his opinion that [people] find out whether Camille Sham'un, Sulayman Franjiyyah, Rashid Karami and others would agree to a referendum on entente. Otherwise, what would be the benefit of an entente in which those [individuals] did not participate?

It is being said that the rationale behind the position of the minister of finance is his fear that the failure of entente may bring about an explosion. As a southern leader he thinks that the land has had enough jolts and needs no more.

The National Movement shares Minister al-Khalil's fears. This movement states clearly that the failure of entente this time will have been [the result of] a plan to explode the situation. The National Movement has been repeating this statement ever since Walid Jumblatt's press conference. Representatives of the National Movement have toured different national agencies like the Writers' Union, the General Labor Union and the remaining forces, conveying to them the fears, the misgivings and the doubts they have about the truthfulness of others in the process of entente.

National Movement staff are saying that inspite of their opposition to the makeup of the army, they do not want this army to collapse. It is from this premise that they oppose thrusting the army into functions and roles that it should not undertake. The army is made up of people, and if the people disagree, the destiny of the army becomes dissolution and break-up.

The state, however, is confident of its army. It considers its establishment under extremely difficult circumstances its major achievement. It denies that the army is partisan and unbalanced, and it praises the Lebanese character of its officers and its constituents, and especially those officers who are assuming sensitive positions.

The state thinks that the new army has proven its support for Sarkis who is known for his moderation. The army does not support any other authority. [The state also thinks] that the army is a capable army and that its capability has been proven by its success in more than one test it went through in the east and in the west.

But Lebanon is made up of states; it is not one state. Most of these states do not share the government's optimistic view of the army's capability as long as national entente remains a perpetual hope living in people's hearts and not a reality that exists in fact.

What calls for pessimism is the fact that Arab and international parties are denying Lebanon's right to take action before all its citizens come to an agreement on a single political and national course. Syria, for example, is asking, "Where are the centers?" By asking this question Syria wants to say that Lebanon does not acquire the full right to take action unless entente is established.

The question, "Where are the centers?" is a hurtful one that no one wants to hear whether that question is raised by the right or by the left. When al-Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil used to raise the question, "Where are the centers?" the western region used to feel that it was being insulted. President Sa'ib Salam used to respond to that question vehemently and forcefully because of his unrestrained feelings about himself and his position as a person who has been and still is the master of his trade.

It is natural for official Lebanon to be provoked by that question when it is raised by fraternal Syria and that, accordingly, problems and obstacles between Damascus and Beirut increase.

Relations between President Sarkis and his aides, and at their forefront is the head of the government, are now at their best. But parliamentary circles and political groups have taken note of the fact that Prime Minister al-Huss had said in the Chamber of Deputies that entente was hypocritical; he had made the statement more than once in newspapers. He even stated once that his presence at the head of government was an indication that entente was not taking place and that the minute it did come into effect, he would disappear from the political scene.

Some deputies are wondering, "Can al-Huss be the suitable man to carry out the entente when he feels that it will remove him from the [prime minister's] palace?"

Thus, fear for entente is the product of the feeling that it is potentially explosive within the state and outside it. There is a feeling that it will collapse as soon as generalities are turned into details and specific points. Everyone, for example, expresses verbal agreement about the unity of Lebanon. But what if the discussion were to deal with the cantons, the federations, decentralization, non-containment and the latest partition innovations that were engendered by the dirty war? Whether we like to or not, we must acknowledge that incompatibility among the parties over the notion of a future Lebanon is almost equal to the establishment or not of a state in the real sense of the word.

The crisis that Sarkis is facing lies in the fact that he supports unity and that he is the head of a broad Maronite base that is saturated with notions of decentralization and fears that Lebanon may return to its past status quo. Most of the Maronites favor a formula different from the political and administrative formula of the past. They believe that the regions must be granted a considerable degree of independence and that qualitative differences in religion, social practices and cultural guidance must be taken into consideration. The areas of Mount Lebanon and some of the coastal areas are to be independent in the decision-making [process and in their choice of a] development model. They are to be tied to all other Lebanese regions by ties that do not restrict their independent decisions.

The president of the republic naturally knows that this line of thought, as it has been presented on the Lebanese front, is not practical and not applicable. Most of those who have proposed this theory are people who are removed from political, economic and administrative reality: they are either philosophers or men of letters like Fu'ad al-Bustani and Charles Malik, or clergymen like some of the professors of al-Kaslik University. They are closet politicians and administrators and have not experienced politics and administration. They have been secure from the Evil One. They have been putting together the garment as they saw fit; and they have been finding fault with the world and with facts, but not with themselves.

The problems of the head of the government are no less momentous. He is under direct pressure not only from the Lebanese, but also from the Syrians, the Palestinians and all the Arabs. They all treat him as one of them and call upon him to exercise discipline on that basis. He is asked to be a conservative Moslem, a leftist, a Palestinian, a Syrian and an Arab--all at the same time. Harmony within one person is most difficult; [how much more difficult] would it then be between parties and communities?

Everything that the Lebanese people agree to is ambiguous; and everything that they disagree about is clear.

The Lebanese people are in agreement about the entente itself; they are in agreement about Lebanon and its existence, its unity, its independence and its democracy. But they disagree about everything else: political and administrative formulae and domestic, Arab and international movements. This is what the president of the republic sensed in the talks he held with the different parties. He found that the soundest route to achieve entente was to do so gradually: to accept the ambiguous generalities and then to deal gradually with the plain details. Some people are saying that the task is bigger than can be done by an agreement on paper. They cite as evidence that the only success in the history of independent Lebanon was this unwritten thing that was called the Covenant. Researchers have failed to uncover its texts and its chapters. The Covenant succeeded because it was pure spirit; entente may not succeed unless it too becomes pure spirit.

The function of texts is that of summoning the spirit in the manner of those who forge [protective] amulets and compose charms.

8592

CSO: 4802

GOVERNMENT, PARLIAMENT OFFICIALS COMMENT ON NATIONAL ENTENTE

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 29 Feb 80 p 17

[Article by Amin al-Siba'i: "Kamil Al-As'ad Accuses State of Wrong Approach to Problem; al-Huss Abandons Process of Reaching Understanding with Damascus Because of Its Complexity, and Selects Process of Reaching (Lebanese Entente) In spite of Difficulty of That Process; Minister al-Qad-ri Says, 'Entente Is a Waste of Time; Solution Lies in Regulating Relations with Damascus'"]

[Text] One of the most curious factors that surrounded the consultations on entente was the admission by [presidential] palace circles and by ministers, even before the results of the consultations appeared, that the attempt to achieve entente was not a serious one. On the eve of the move by the presidential palace to consult with political leaders about the entente initiative, most of the ministers held an opinion that exemplified this wave of pessimism. When asked about his expectations for the entente initiative, every minister would say, "Be serious now! What entente are you talking about?"

Prior to the consultations, the various influential political leaders had affirmed that they were not satisfied with the entente initiative. The leadership of the Lebanese Front was at the forefront of those who were casting doubts on entente. Its president, Camille Sham'un, had stated in the newspapers [several] days in succession that the road to entente was blocked. He firmly established that fact by boycotting the talks at the [presidential] palace.

Speaker of the House of Deputies Kamil al-As'ad was also quite blunt in his candor when he conveyed to President Sarkis and to Prime Minister Salim al-Huss the point of view of the majority of deputies on the results of the talks that took place with Syrian officials and on the talks being held in an attempt to achieve a national entente as envisioned by the state.

Kamil al-As'ad said that during his visit to Damascus he heard nothing to suggest that the sequence of steps for a solution was the same as that which the government had announced after the return of its delegation of ministers from Syria. This sequence is achievement of entente, followed by the drawing up of a security plan, followed by reorganization of Lebanese-Syrian relations. [He said] that he was not able to understand from the government the

reasons and the justifications that led it to adopt this sequence. He frankly believes that putting entente ahead of the security plan and of regulating relations with Syria was a wrong approach to a problem that everyone believes cannot be remedied in this manner. The Syrians have obvious justifications for their dissatisfaction with some of what is happening here. In the area of security, they cannot accept that some areas of Lebanon should remain as a springboard for harming them or threatening their security, a stage for the activities of those who work against them, or a center for collecting information about their forces. Therefore, the state should have immediately started to look into the subject of Lebanese-Syrian relations, and to come to an agreement with the Syrian state about all issues and programs of cooperation and action. It would then proceed from this basic point to implement a comprehensive security plan that would proceed alongside the achievement of entente. At that point, the Syrian position would constitute a basic factor that would help the legitimate Lebanese government overcome any obstacle that may stand in the way of the security plan and entente.

Kamil Al-As'ad then said with the same candor that the third step of the settlement program which addresses relations with Syria must replace the first step. He said that national entente should not be at the head of the settlement program in spite of the fact that everyone knows in advance that an approach will lead nowhere.

Al-As'ad also said, "The state in the legitimate sense of the word calls for conciliation and for respect for its sovereignty by those who usurped the instruments of legitimate authority by force of arms. These people cannot easily give up all the privileges, powers and influence they assumed."

Al-As'ad used to say in his political and official speeches: "I am afraid that the discussions in Damascus with Lebanese Prime Minister Salim al-Huss may have come to the core of bilateral relations and the method of regulating them." When al-Huss avoided taking positions on very plain issues, he was told [by the Syrians]: "All right, go ahead and reach agreement on the difficult [question] of entente." Thereupon, the state adopted the idea so as to avoid the responsibilities of making decisions on basic questions. It began to look for ways to return the ball to the court of those who had asked it to adopt a firm position on the principal questions.

Al-As'ad comments on this by repeating his statement that the country's interests and destiny do not amount to a ball that two teams throw to each other in a spacious field. The responsibility does appear to be enormous, especially with regard to the legitimate authority which is supposed to restore a hierarchy of priorities, to give its foremost attention to the question of regulating relations with Syria, and to conduct its inquiries with the principal party, which is Syria, instead of looking into solutions with intermediaries. It can thus dispense with the intermediaries whose ambitions, desires and demands only lead to disasters.

Al-As'ad considers that being distracted by impossible and non-feasible solutions increases the acuteness of the problem and enables those who work behind the scenes to railroad their programs. Everyone is proclaiming the slogan of fighting the establishment of permanent settlements, but people disagree when they go into the details. If matters remain as they are, the Lebanese people will find themselves one day looking at the implementation of the settlement project and submitting to it within the policy of the fiat accompli.

Al-As'ad told a number of deputies: "I can understand, for example, that a specific investigation be undertaken into the establishment of an entente among those who are fighting. And I can understand that this would even lead to the hope that an entente on security will be established to prevent subjecting Lebanon to further destruction. But the fact that the components of a political solution are ignored or postponed, and the fact that leaders are called upon to search for the lost entente with everybody being concerned solely with how to return the ball to the other side's court, is definitely suicidal. In practical terms this is submission to the authority of the armed men. I fear that the beginning of the search for entente may be a new beginning for chaos and a new beginning for destruction, especially since we are clearly seeing the numerous errors that are staring at us and threatening us."

Some of the ministers who visited Damascus before the outcome of the political consultations about entente had been determined, returned to Beirut before the end of last week with impressions similar to those of Speaker al-As'ad.

Minister Nazim al-Qadiri informed some politicians upon his return from Damascus of his discovery that every official or politician who goes to Syria hears the same definition of the dimensions of the problem with Lebanon. Each official or politician, however, returns with conflicting, personal interpretations that contradict the interpretations of those who had gone before him. This increases the confusion in the situation and heightens the incompatibility of efforts.

Minister al-Qadiri says, "If you were to ask for my personal opinion, I would say that consultations about entente are a waste of time. They will not lead to results. It would be better to complete the official talks with Damascus, to conclude those talks with a frank, bilateral summit between Presidents Sarkis and al-Asad, and to lay down a specific program of action that would spontaneously guarantee determination of the required steps for a solution to the crisis."

Al-Qadiri said, "The president of the republic has become convinced that regulating relations with Damascus is necessary. He is looking for the appropriate approaches [to that]. The entente talks that everyone is watching amount to no more than procrastination."

On his return from Damascus, al-Qadiri has conveyed to the Council of Ministers documents about Lebanese-Syrian relations. He has also conveyed the

verbatim text of a statement made by Minister 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam in which he clarified the reasons for the crisis and the solutions for it. Al-Qadiri used these texts to affirm the importance of regulating relations with Syria and of coming to an agreement with it in all areas of future cooperation.

Anticipating the surprises that have been taken into consideration and others that have not, one of the prominent ministers says that opening the file of entente, which will not bring about results, has led to the hitting of several birds with one stone. On one hand, it froze [the decision] to send the army to Beirut. On the other hand, it froze the sharp differences around relying on this army for security control. Thirdly, it shelved the function of the Arab Follow-Up Committee. Fourthly, it closed again the file on stationing the army in South Lebanon.

What is more important than all this is that the discussion about entente should not lead to an artificial security blow-up similar to those blow-ups that always endangered every project or attempt made to bring about an entente among the Lebanese people. This is what we have begun to see recently on the Lebanese scene. This is a natural expectation because those who are hurt by entente, according to a former head of the government, are innumerable.

8592

CSO: 4802

OBSTACLES TO NATIONAL ACCORD ANALYZED

Beirut THE ARAB WORLD WEEKLY in English 22 Mar 80 pp 15-18

[Text] The Lebanese government has covered wide strides over the past two weeks towards the implementation of the new Army Law and the definition of the country's defense policy. When the national accord process was launched, a few weeks ago, it was deemed that failure to implement the Army Law and to rebuild the Army accordingly was one of the main obstacles to national accord and that, once these conditions were met, it would be easier to bring Lebanese leaders together and proceed with the implementation of the 14 national accord principles proclaimed by Lebanese President Elias Sarkis two weeks ago.

However, the picture has somehow changed over the past few days and there is growing concern among Lebanese political circles that the promulgation of the necessary decrees for the implementation of the Army Law will not be enough to set the country on the path to political stability and that, even though the Army and accord question are deemed to be purely Lebanese, more contacts and understanding with both the Syrian and Palestinian leaderships will be necessary.

Defense Policy. Last Saturday, March 15, the Lebanese Council of Ministers defined the mainstays of the country's new defense policy as resistance to Israeli occupation in South Lebanon, the restoration of legitimacy over the entire Lebanese territory and the mobilization of Lebanon's resources in defense of common Arab causes.

These goals would be achieved through the implementation of Security Council resolutions on South Lebanon, coordination with the Arab countries and particularly Syria, and the implementation of existing Lebanese-Palestinian agreements

An official statement issued after the Cabinet meeting last Saturday said that the defense policy fell within the framework of the national accord principles announced by President Sarkis on March 5 and aimed at preserving Lebanon's independence within its internationally-recognized boundaries and extending the State's authority over the entire country.

The statement said that in the present circumstances, the defense policy aimed specifically at:

--Resisting Israeli occupation in South Lebanon, removing its traces, regaining all land, safeguarding all parts of Lebanon, namely against Israel's expansionist and aggressive ambitions, and adhering to the (Lebanese-Israeli) Armistice Agreement.

--Resisting anything which might jeopardize the international security of the State, reinforcing security, spreading legitimacy and the rule of law over all parts of Lebanon, preserving the freedoms of the citizens and their rights, and ensuring the normal functioning of the State institutions.

--Strengthening Lebanon's resources in all fields for the defense of the Lebanese and Arab causes, particularly the Palestinian cause, in the framework of Arab solidarity, helping the Palestinian people achieve their right to self-determination, and rejecting the resettlement (of Palestinians in Lebanon).

The statement spelled out the means to achieve these aims as being:

--Working for the full implementation of the Security Council resolutions on South Lebanon, enabling the Army to participate in this implementation according to a program which would be worked out for this purpose in coordination with the secretariat-general of the United Nations, and intensifying diplomatic contacts to that end.

--Coordination with Arab states--in keeping with the joint defense pact--in all matters related to the conflict with Israel, and bolstering coordination with Syria in view of the privileged relations between the two countries and the interdependence of their security, while respecting the sovereignty, independence and system (of government) of each of the two states.

--Implementing existing agreements with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in a correct way, within the framework of the international resolutions on South Lebanon and the respect of Lebanese sovereignty.

--Providing the means necessary to implement this policy, and entrusting the Higher Defense Council and specialized institutions with the task of working out the modalities of implementation.

Army Statement. The first indication of Lebanon's new policy in defense matters came later in the week in the form of a Lebanese Army Command communique issued on Thursday to condemn the Israeli aggressions against the South. This was the first time since 1975 that the Lebanese Army had issued such a statement, and the first time too that it referred to the Jewish state as "the Israeli enemy." It constituted yet another step

towards making the Lebanese Army more acceptable to all sides, and in particular to the Lebanese leftist National Movement which is still objecting to the deployment of the Army in the western sectors of the capital.

The Army communique accused "the Israeli enemy of daily bombardment of southern towns and villages in the period extending from March 14 to 20." It said Israeli shelling had concentrated on the towns of Tyre and Nabatiyeh and had extended to include the port of Ryre and surrounding localities. It added that during the last three days, the shelling hit the suburbs of Sidon, causing a death toll of four in addition to 14 injured.

The concern of Lebanese officialdom is that this attitude may not be enough to convince the National Movement of the "balanced" nature of the Lebanese Army. The organizational decrees will need time to be promulgated and since there are no assurances that the Syrian forces will wait this long before withdrawing, there is an urgent need for the deployment of the Army at any time.

The National Movement had demanded that, in addition to issuing the organizational decrees of the Army, the Lebanese State carries out a number of changes in the leadership of the armed forces and the security forces and other agencies, such as the Deuxieme Bureau (military intelligence).

These demands are seen as falling more into the realm of political reforms than purely military questions and Lebanese officials were reported as expressing fears that whether the government accepts or refuses to meet these demands, conflicts will emerge, with the government and among the various political forces.

Furthermore, the National Movement has demanded that new persons be appointed in positions whose occupants are generally and traditionally appointed directly by the President of the Republic. Thus, to demand that these posts be included in the change is seen as a direct challenge to the Presidency. The positions in question are those of: the Commander in Chief of the Lebanese Army--who usually comes with the President and leaves when the President's term is over; the head of the Deuxieme Bureau, the head of the Sorete Generale, the Director of the Internal Security Forces, the Foreign Minister and the Director General of the Information Ministry.

In order to ensure that the Army will be deployed as soon as Syrian forces leave the capital, Lebanese officials are intensifying contacts with Damascus and the PLO to inform them that the Army is ready and to obtain from them assurances of facilities and assistance in overcoming obstacles of all kinds. Syrian assistance in this respect is deemed to be imperative especially for the survival of the present cabinet if a conflict over the Army should emerge between the government and the leftist alliance. A great deal hinges on the real intentions of the Syrian regime.

Informed observers in Beirut said that Syrian support for Lebanese officialdom was ensured because of domestic and regional considerations and that Palestinian support was equally ensured because of Palestinian concern over their rather tepid relations with Damascus at present.

Moves have already been taken for a summit between President Elias Sarkis and PLO leader Yasser Arafat, and towards the end of the week, speculations had it the meeting would be imminent.

Difficulties Face Formation of Cabinet. The idea of forming a new cabinet has been dismissed as untimely for the time being, but, the State is apparently facing strong obstacles in its move to replace former Minister of State Charles Helou--who resigned over four months ago--and the late Bahij Takiuddin who held the Interior portfolio in the current government.

The President had reportedly wished to reinforce the cabinet team by bringing in Phalangist, MP Amin Gemayel and Progressive Socialist Party leader Walid Jumblat, to replace Helou and Takiuddin. However, as things stand now, the Phalangists, and especially members of the Gemayel family, seem to be unwelcome. They are rejected by former President Suleiman Franjieh, by Damascus and by PSP leader Jumblat.

Informed observers said that President Sarkis had asked former Premier Rashid Karami to settle the conflict between the Phalangist Party and Mr Franjieh, but this was to no avail. The former Premier was reported to have suggested to Mr Franjieh to name any moderate Phalangist he would accept in the cabinet, but the proposal was reportedly deemed unacceptable for the Phalangists who are insisting that the minister be a member of the Gemayel family.

On the other hand, during the festival that was held in Aley on the occasion of the third anniversary of Kamal Jumblat's assassination, PSP leader Walid Jumblat lashed out violently against the Lebanese Front which it charged of collaborating with Israel. His speech was noted for its harder stand against the rightwing alliance. Furthermore, in Damascus, the Syrian authorities have more than once accused the Lebanese Front, and the Phalangists in particular of helping the Moslem Brotherhood in its anti-regime activities.

Three Dangers. In addition to the difficulties facing the deployment of the Army in Beirut and the formation of the government, three dangers were listed by Prime Minister Selim Hoss in a private conversation as being the main ones threatening national accord: 1) A sudden Syrian withdrawal that would take place before the beginning of the reconstruction of the Army; 2) the assassination of a major leader of any side; and 3) the continuation of Israeli bombardment of the southern port city of Sidon which would send thousands of refugees from the South to Beirut triggering problems and clashes similar to those that were witnessed two years ago when Israeli forces occupied part of the South.

NATION'S FINANCE SYSTEM DESCRIBED

Beirut THE ARAB WORLD WEEKLY in English 29 Mar 80 pp 14-15

[Text] Finance System Survives War Effects. As governments, financiers and speculators watched the bewildering rise in the price of gold in the closing months of 1979, Lebanon's Central Bank and Finance Ministry officials must have been beaming with satisfaction. Their long standing policy of maintaining much of the country's reserves in gold was paying off.

Gold reserves which at the nominal price of SDR 35 a fine ounce, worth about \$400 million, commanded a market value of about \$6,000 million.

Gold coverage of the country's currency, the Lebanese Pound, has always been more than 100 percent, and is now much more than ever. So it is hardly strange that in the past five years of political unrest and even in the bloodiest days of the 1975-76 civil war, confidence in the Lebanese Pound, and in the banking system in general remained high.

There was no real financial panic, some banks remained open throughout the fighting, there were no restrictions on the transfer of funds into or out of the country and the exchange rate was kept freely floating.

Such a picture ignores the serious effects the civil war has had on Lebanon's banks and on the whole economy. Up to 1975 Beirut was by far the most important commercial center in the region, and its well organised banking system has been a big attraction to the international corporations seeking a base in the Middle East.

In the years after the 1973 oil price increases, Beirut's banks were an important channel for Arab capital seeking investment opportunities in the financial markets of Europe, the United States and the Far East.

The rise of other important financial centers in the region, such as Bahrain and Kuwait has deprived the Lebanese banking system of an important source of business. The Arab petrodollars which have been handled through Beirut, have found more direct routes to the capital markets of the industrialised countries. Beirut still has many things to offer--a wide variety

of financial services, experienced staff, stringent banking secrecy, and a strong domestic currency--but it lacks that most important merit sought by the international businessman, security.

Hope for the future remains. It would be wrong to think that, just because Beirut has lost its place as the Hong Kong of the Middle East, Lebanese banking has fallen into stagnation. Far from it. The bankers' resourcefulness and flexibility has enabled them to adjust to the adverse conditions with remarkable success.

Many reacted by moving to Paris, Brussels or elsewhere, setting up branch offices, representative offices, subsidiaries and affiliates providing banking experience and services to Lebanese and other expatriate companies, and continuing to act as channel funds from the Arab oil rich countries.

The list of such banks is long but includes Jammal Trust Bank, Litex Bank in London, Byblos Arab Finance Bank in Brussels, and in Paris Banque Libanaise pour le Commerce, Banque Libano-Francaise, Banque de l'Orient Arabe et d'Outre Mer and many others. Lebanese banks have also been active in the Gulf, particularly in the UAE.

Liquidity: For the banks in Lebanon, the main problem since the end of the War has been an excess of liquidity. With confidence in the banks and the currency high, but with few opportunities for domestic investment, the banks found themselves with more money flowing in than they knew what to do with. The result was a temptation to lend money for speculative purposes, particularly in real estate and foreign currencies.

This contributed to inflation estimated to be more than 20 percent each year and led last Summer to disturbing fluctuations in the exchange rate. As a result the authorities decided to impose credit ceilings on the banks and tightened reserve requirements, at the same time allowing a greater proportion of those reserves to be held in the form of government securities.

The government was not slow to see the advantages to itself of an over-liquid banking system. Before 1976 it had hardly ever needed to borrow from the banking system because its budget generally showed a surplus. But since then the government has been unable to collect a large proportion of its taxes and so its spending has been financed partly through bank borrowing.

A deficit of more than LL 1 billion was included in last year's budget and financed largely through short term to medium term treasury bills. The government is currently considering the possibilities of establishing a brokerage firm to encourage a secondary market for dealing in government securities.

BRIEFS

FIRST CONVERTIBLE BONDS--Beirut has taken an important but restricted step towards the creation of a local market for bonds (AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO, March 3) with the successful flotation of convertible bonds for the Societe Tourisme et Sports d'Hiver Faraya-Mzaar SAL. The 30,000 bonds, with a total value of LL 10.5 million (\$3.125 million), are the first to be issued in Lebanon. The issue was underwritten by J Henry Schroder and Company SAL, the Beirut subsidiary of the London merchant banking house. The bonds, which will run until March 31, 1990, carry a coupon of 9 percent. Holders of the bonds will be entitled to convert each bond into Five Faraya-Mzaar shares from April 1, 1981. The bonds were offered to current holders of Faraya-Mzaar shares on the basis of one bond for every 10 shares held. All of the bonds were taken up by the shareholders and so the underwriters did not have to open the issue to public subscription. Although this ensured the success of the issue, it was perhaps unfortunate for the future bond market that an attempt to reach a wider public was unnecessary. With Beirut's Bourse (Stock Exchange) languishing in the doldrums and doing only nominal business, the advertising that a public bond issue would have required would have drawn attention to the existence of of this new form of investment in Lebanon, which was made possible as the result of a law passed in 1977. One bond issue does not, alas, make a market. [Text] [Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 24 Mar 80 p 10]

CSO: 4820

MAURITANIA

SPECIAL ISLAMIC LAW COURT CREATED

Paris LE MONDE in French 9-10 Mar 80 p 3

[Text] The creation of a special Islamic law court using the "Charia" (Islamic jurisprudence)--according to which thieves could have their hand cut and assassins be beheaded--has been approved by the Mauritanian Council of Ministers. According to a communique published on Friday, 7 March, the new law is designed to fight the rise in crime. It will be applied "to crimes committed against persons and their property, according to Islamic law."

9341

CSO: 4400

MAURITANIA

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO REDUCE FOOD SHORTAGE

Nouakchott CHAAB in French 4 Mar 80 pp 1, 3

[Text] In theory, all the development plans elaborated since independence and all the economic and political orientation texts give absolute priority to the rural sector. In reality, however, one notices that this sector has remained the poor relative until now, a fact which is well illustrated by the constant deterioration in the living conditions of Mauritanian shepherds and farmers. Therefore, it is not surprising that this problem is one of the main concerns of the Military Committee for National Salvation /CMSN/, whose program finally has the merit of giving concrete meaning to that priority given to the rural sector.

The objective in this field is to reduce the food shortage, as much as possible, thanks to extensive activity reclaiming farmable land and strongly reforming the traditional production methods.

The experience acquired in recent years since the creation of the SONADER [National Rural Development Company] is interesting in this respect. Conceived in 1975 in the image of the SNIM [National Industrial and Mining Company] to play the same role in rural development, the SONADER is in charge of conceiving studies and carrying out and managing hydro-agricultural projects. Naturally, it is called to play an important role in the effort of land reclamation, thanks to a mastery of available water resources.

The SONADER has already taken charge of the extensive program of parcelling out the Gorgol Valley, covering more than 10,000 hectares of cultivable land. The first section of this program, under study since independence, was completed only in 1978. It was a pilot project of 700 hectares whose parcelling out has cost 500 million ouguiya. It must be pointed out however that the study and execution of this work was completed without the SONADER's assistance.

Beside Gorgol, the SONADER has been put in charge of guiding the first program of 18 small parcels averaging 20 acres each carried out by village communities. The SONADER's role is to identify the sites, give technical advice to the farmers and furnish them with pumping equipment. At the same time it will assist the cooperatives which are created during the parcelling out.

The Gorgol and the small parcels are the two main points of development of this modern agriculture which is being put in service slowly and is expected to develop rapidly. But the Gorgol experience is interesting for more than one reason, because it is a model of the problems that this development is going to pose in the future.

The Gorgol

Started in 1975, the parcelling out of 700 hectares, the first section of a program encompassing 10,000 hectares in the Gorgol Valley, came to an end in 1977. Many technical flaws observed in the equipment delayed the cultivation of the first irrigated surfaces. Technical and conception deficiencies have not been the only handicaps, or the least, in comparison with the complexity of the landed system, which had not been seriously studied beforehand.

Now, the reclaimed land traditionally belonged to a dozen families who set their own rent rules and the rates to be paid by the landless farmers. Then, was it necessary to maintain this system by making a gift of the 500 million ouguiya investment to the owners alone? Or could other ways be chosen and which?

Many compromises had been worked out with the owners, whose demands multiplied in proportion as the official alterations followed one another. The result: the first harvest in 1978 was a dismal failure since only 100 of the 500 hectares irrigated were effectively cultivated. The owners had succeeded in intimidating the farmers, discouraging them from dealing with the SONADER, despite the advantages and undue favors that had been granted them.

In fact, each owner family was awarded one-half hectare and retained the right to designate the assignees of 30 percent of the areas it transferred to the state. Clearly, that means that in reality each family retains the right to oversee 30 percent of its land and no guarantees can be given against the forms of metayage which could ensue.

These concessions, which did not prevent the sabotage of the first harvest, resulted from a policy of improvisation and experimentation which has characterized all sectors of national life. Also, it has been within the framework of the overall relief policy that the CMSN has settled down to remove the obstacles, thus choosing difficulty rather than the devastating demagoguery. How could they in fact consent to huge investments for the profit of some individuals who steal the hard labor of thousands of farmers. This states in a general manner the whole landed problem and some clear and precise guidelines will be defined by the CMSN.

It must be noted in this context that the landed problem is much less acute in the small village parcels where the farmers themselves want an equitable distribution of the land.

This experience with small plots might be able to determine the system for exploiting the parcelled-out land, in the same way that it has already inspired the method of dividing the land that will be applied to the Boghe Plain, where parcelling out is in process.

Contrary to the Gorgol, the reclaiming of the Boghe Plain has been seriously studied in all its aspects, the landed problem in particular. This time the traditional owners have all signed in advance a deed of cession of the land to the state. Parcels will be divided according to the system currently being used in the small plots, that is, 0.25 hectares per person, but the distribution will be carried out by the farmers themselves, under the supervision of the SONADER.

Other Divisions Into Plots

The implementation of a national relief policy has restored confidence and, consequently, stimulated project which had been postponed due to the uncertainties the country suffered during the last years. Therefore, the state has been able since 1979 to release the documents of projects financed with foreign aid and, for this reason, several actions are currently under way.

The work of parcelling out the Boghe Plain, 4,000 hectares, has recently been started. The first actions have to do with a pilot program of 1,000 hectares that will cost 1,200 billion ouguiya. The first section of 500 hectares will be available in July 1981.

--Forty small plots will be put in production next July, the first section of a program of 70 parcels in the region of Rosso and Kaedi (18 parcels are in production since 1977).

--Twelve dams are under construction in Hodh, an investment amounting to 400 millions ouguiya.

--The feasibility study of the Foun El Gheita dam on the Black Gorgol has been finished and a call for bids has been issued. This dam, with a capacity of 500,000 cubic meters, will permit the irrigation of 3,600 hectares in the Gorgol Plain.

--A project of ten small plots in Tagant whose financing has been obtained will permit cultivation of vegetables and fruits.

--Other important projects whose financing do not pose any problems are currently under study, including the parcelling out of Lac de R'Kiz, l-Aftout Sahli, the M'Bagne region, etc....

A real portfolio of projects is being formed at SONADER within the framework of the program to eliminate the food shortage. This shortage is currently estimated at 100,000 tons of rice annually, it can be estimated that, at the rate of one harvest per year, that 8,000 hectares of rice fields will have to be parcelled out in order to achieve self-sufficiency in rice.

That means that the objective is not impossible to achieve, but farming is not enough; it is also necessary to assure the packaging and sale of the products. This simple aspect alone deserves a policy which it is urgent to conceive right now.

(Ministry in charge of the CMSN)

9341

CSO: 4400

USFP COMMISSION ISSUES COMMUNIQUE ON CURRENT SITUATION

Casablanca LIBERATION in French 29 Feb 80 pp 2, 3

[Excerpts] The Administrative Commission of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces [USFP], meeting in the first ordinary session of 1980 on 24 February in Rabat

--After having heard an orientation report on the current general situation, presented by First Secretary Abderrahim Bouabid,

--After having discussed many national, Arab and international questions,

Reports the following:

Morocco's structural crisis is a reality which is being felt in all sectors. Its direct effects reflect the manner in which the government apparatus is exercising authority.

What we called the "democratic process"--in exceeding its many shortcomings and in the hope that it may evolve toward continuous improvement--is on its way to becoming a "process of repression" whose objective is to forestall certain events and wave a stick before any attempt at opposition of protest, even in a strictly legal framework. Thus, the government has resorted to the discharging of more than 1,500 teachers, public health employees and employees of other sectors for having used their legitimate and legal right to strike. Moreover, it has not hesitated to hand tens of militants over to the courts on the basis of texts buried with the protectorate but exhumed for this occasion. For more than a year our country has thus witnessed a series of trials which are still going on and which involve workers as well as students. This process interferes with the right to strike, freedom of speech and freedom of the press. In the absence of actual fact, this is increasingly taking on the form of a trial of intent.

It is in this context that certain members of USFP's National Administrative Commission [CAN] and a number of students, some of whom are party militants, were arrested, interrogated and tortured.

It is also in this context that the government apparatus decided to ignore the strike of the phosphate workers in Khouribga, even though it had lasted more than 3 months (pieceworkers), thus giving legitimacy to the obstinacy of the OCP /Moroccan Phosphate Office/ directorate, which refuses any dialog with the representatives of the working class in this city.

In like manner, the government is continuing to ignore the social and pedagogic drama it has brought about in discharging 1,500 teachers and health employees through an arbitrary and illegal measure.

Lastly, the government has decided to continue its repressive process by announcing the withdrawal of a scholarship from any student who engages in a strike.

In strongly denouncing the new wave of arrests and extortions, CAN reaffirms its solidarity with all comrades affected by this campaign, whether members of CAN like Comrade Mounir who is still in prison*, or of the youth party, or militants in local or regional organizations, and who are always arrested by the police with no word filtering through on their fate or on "the bill of indictment" made against them.

Perceiving the seriousness of the current situation, CAN feels it to be its duty to advise the authorities once more that the present process of repression will in no way affect the determination of the USFP militants but is particularly affecting Morocco's image and the credibility of its positions in its struggle to safeguard its territorial unity.

No grain of sand of our Sahara--where the Liberation Army shed its blood and where the courageous Royal Armed Forces are shedding theirs--could be subject to negotiation or concession. Moroccan Sahara, not long ago the time-honored land of our ancestors, is now a land of many war orphans deprived of their fathers who have fallen on the field of battle in the face of perfidious aggression.

This land is more than ever Moroccan. It is impossible that it could be subject to a concession of any kind.

The USFP insists on pointing out this reality to all those who are interested in this question, whether close by or far away. It reaffirms that the problem is basically a bilateral dispute between Morocco and Algeria, whose nature reflects the aftereffects of colonialism. In this context, the USFP

*We have learned that Comrade Mounir Omar, member of CAN, was released on Wednesday, 27 February, at 0100 hours. Comrade Mounir was the victim of an arbitrary arrest on 2 February in Fqih B. Salah. In addition, Barakat Lyazid and Hachmi Fajri were also released the same day.

supports any attempt aimed at avoiding the dangers of a direct confrontation in the Maghreb [Northwest Africa: Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia] by urging cooperation in settling the bilateral dispute with strict respect for the national territorial unity of each party and the construction of an Arab Maghreb liberated from imperialist dependence and any other form of foreign domination.

With Regard to the Arab and Islamic Plan

CAN reiterates the position expressed by USFP's Politburo relative to international events. In this respect, it denounces foreign intervention in Afghanistan, the threats aimed at aborting or distorting the revolution of the Iranian people. It also proclaims its solidarity with the Tunisian people and their national and democratic forces in their refusal of any form of foreign intervention and influence.

CAN also reaffirms its complete solidarity with the Palestinian Revolution in its struggle against the Zionist enemy and against attempts being made to weaken or abort it. It stresses the importance of solidarity between the PLO and the various factions of the Lebanese national and democratic forces. Moreover, it supports the initiative of the Republic of Iraq in drawing up a Pan-Arab charter. It believes that it is necessary to draw up a similar charter which would include all national and democratic parties and liberation movements in the Arab and Islamic world.

The purpose of this charter would be to stand united in the face of any attempts aimed at encroaching upon the independence and territorial integrity of their country either through the installation of foreign bases or by increasing the country's dependence on foreign centers of domination. These objectives would also include the mobilization of all material, human and moral potentialities to put an end to the question disturbing Arabs and Moslems, that of Palestine and the liberation of Jerusalem.

National Administrative Commission of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces,
Rabat, 24 February 1980.

8568
CSO: 4400

COMMENT ON GOVERNMENT WITHDRAWAL OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Criticism of USFP Students

Rabat L'OPINION in French 1 Mar 80 pp 1, 3

[Article by Naim Kamal: "Open letter to Moroccan students: Democracy is not one-way"]

[Excerpts] Since mid-January, Casablanca's daily newspaper, AL MOHARRIR, has been carrying on a press campaign in its columns based, to say the least, on falsehood or the use of falsehood.

For purely propaganda needs, it has termed this campaign as being one of "solidarity" with the students, especially those belonging to the USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces], and then, with those who are not members, who have been subject to arrest.

It is not that we wish to assert that this is the result of the imagination--often fertile--of the editors of AL MOHARRIR or to dictate to it what it must write. Far from it.

That is its right; or better still, the nihilist role it has chosen to assume.

It is a noble thing that AL MOHARRIR is denouncing at arm's length (or at pages' length) the abuses and hindrances being exercised against our democratic practices here and there by archaic mentalities. Must the line of conduct of the party which uses this newspaper as its spokesman still be a definite prolonging of this attitude?

What is the situation in reality?

To answer this, it is essential to reconstruct the three major stages which marked the evolution of UNEM [National Union of Moroccan Students], the split in 1959 and the founding of UGEM [General Union of Moroccan Students], the elimination of USFP members from UNEM's directorate in 1972 and the return to legal status in 1979.

The Current Situation

An objective evaluation of these sterile rivalries through the years will show that everything, or nearly everything, has been done by the students to their own detriment.

In this respect, the strikes, rallies and demonstrations held by the students have not been in the form of union action to improve the student situation but, rather, a means of serving political designs. In other words, it was an outward manifestation of a politically higher bid, an objective held by each and everyone, to strengthen its positions, some for power, some--it will be revealed later--in the service of the enemies of the Moroccan people.

The USFP is complaining about the legitimacy of the 16th congress. The former antinational directorate believes that of the 15th and is conducting an intensive campaign from abroad against the cause of the Moroccan people in the Sahara. This is intolerable. This action passes for treason, not even justified by the Marxist theory which, in this case, is stripped of its dialectic essence to the benefit of a static analysis.

In this framework, a complete plan of university destabilization has been started. Not as they would have us believe, in connection with union demands, but apparently to impede Morocco's action aimed at safeguarding our territorial unity.

This is the deterioration theory.

The current UNEM directorate is aware of this. In fact, "the party bases" are overflowing.

In this respect, it would be sufficient to know that, at the faculty of medicine where the USFP members are in the majority, they are protesting 48-hour strikes and want to limit them to 1 hour.

At the faculty of the humanities in Rabat, where they are in the minority, they are conspicuous by their absence in the planning of rallies. Did they not tacitly boycott "The Day of Struggle Against Imperialism"?

This attitude is not to be connected with the meeting their leader had with the Zionist, Peres, during the conference of the Socialist International in Lisbon. This is to be added to the account of their awareness of the existence of the tactic of escalation.

Only recently, a member of UNEM's Executive Committee declared during a general assembly that "abandonment of the uprising by the USFP does not mean abandonment of the revolution."

Of what uprising?

As for the arrests of USFP and non-USFP students which AL MOHARRIR plays up, let us express things more clearly.

In a communique, the USFP Politburo (AL MOHARRIR of 15 February) protests "an attempt made against the internal security of the party." We are in complete agreement with that. Why, then, did AL MOHARRIR, on 9 August 1979, publish the communique on the expulsion of members termed "suspects" of the "Ittihadia Youth"? Even giving their names (!!).

In conclusion, we shall avoid advising AL MOHARRIR that it would gain much more in opting for clarity in making itself the authentic reflection of the true positions of its partisans but that all of the preceding needs no commentary.

Criticism of Government Policy

Casablanca LIBERATION in French 29 Feb 80 p 5

[Article by B.D.: "Obvious Evidence of University Malaise"]

[Excerpts] The brief government communique, issued on 18 February 1980 by radio and television announcing new repressive measures taken with regard to the students, is added to the already long list of arbitrary decisions aimed at democratic and constitutional freedoms in our country.

This time again, the government has decided to deny a scholarship to any student who will allegedly participate in any protest strike. The reasons for this decision escape no one in view of the repressive measures carried out by the government since the strikes of 10 and 11 April 1979 in the education and public health sectors. And although the CDT [Confederation of Labor] still continues to be the subject of not less arbitrary dealings, the National Union of Moroccan Students (UNEM), which has just reestablished the basic structures of its organization after 6 years of suspension, now sees itself as a target..

In fact, the scope of the university crisis, to which UNEM has not ceased attracting the attention of the authorities, is explained by the overall crisis which the privileged classes persist in worsening to the detriment of the essential and daily needs of the overwhelming majority of the people. Recourse to this high-handed behavior is also explained by the incapability of the authorities to rise to the level of the aspirations of the people for a democratic form of teaching which will permit all undergraduate students to have access to the university.

Recent events show in all aspects the attitude of the authorities toward objective questions posed by this or that sector: Simultaneously with the wave of arrests and interrogations in the student circle, government forces

have on many occasions violated university premises to bludgeon male or female students meeting in general assemblies or making protests against the various arbitrary measures taken against them. For example, twice in the last 2 weeks the faculty of law in Casablanca has been the scene of a show of force.

It is in this tense atmosphere that the communique of the UNEM Executive Committee reaffirms the adherence of the student body to its legitimate demands and acquisitions among which is the principle of generalized scholarships, which the authorities consider "an offering."

"Resorting to a cessation of the scholarship," the communique stresses in particular, "clearly reveals the intentions of the authorities to preclude access of the sons and daughters of the people to university studies."

The government attitude in no way aids in dispelling the malaise of the Moroccan university. For this malaise does not stem only from conjunctural problems. It is not just a matter of the scholarship, the material conditions of the studies and the like, which pose a problem.

It is the entire position of the university in Morocco's social life and development strategy which is being questioned. What good is a university, if it is not a part of the overall perspective which links the training of skilled personnel to the country's economic options and development needs?

It is in these terms that the university crisis, of which the student struggle is only the most obvious evidence, is posed and demands to be apprehended. That is, if the official policy with regard to that crisis does not evade the essential point.

8568
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COMPANIES INCREASE UNEMPLOYMENT BY LOCKOUTS, CLOSINGS

Casablanca L'AVANTGARDE in French 1 Mar 80 pp 1, 3

[Text] A certain number of companies are closing their doors under various pretexts, thus idling a great number of workers who, from one day to the next, find themselves in dire straits.

How may we explain this phenomenon which is tending to become more widespread?

The economic situation in the country is one of severe crisis resulting from a generalized organizational crisis. This crisis reveals the parasitic nature of the private sector, incapable of adapting itself and reorganizing, despite all the advantages it has been given.

It took only a wavering of public investments to make the private sector, accustomed to easy profits, bristle and reveal its true countenance, that of a leech disturbed in its work.

It appears obvious that our "business people," who have nothing in common with their teachers in Western metropolises, like high and sure profits and are not willing to endure a period when profits have only slightly dipped.

Thus, "our bosses," who had taken the precaution to invest in several activities at once, start off by sacrificing those which, in their opinion, present the "most problems," particularly social problems in the form of legitimate demands by the workers.

The closing of plants is preceded by calculations knowingly drawn up, such as:

--the building up of stock for several months in anticipation of the closing which the owner himself arranges, often sure that he is in tune with the "thinking" of the authorities;

--flow of capital abroad: investments, real estate at Costa del Sol, among others;

--flow of capital toward speculative sectors where illegal transactions are not lacking;

--excessive hoarding to the detriment of the national interest.

At a time when the authorities "exhort" the private sector to create jobs, it creates unemployment.

The availability of a qualified and numerous work force on the labor market makes it possible for employers to dispose of them cheaply in view of serious competition.

Moreover, the proliferation of "clandestine labor" is not accidental. It has certain corollaries: avoiding the payment of taxes, having docile and non-declared labor, impoverishment of the work force, and the like.

The legislation, which dates from the era of the protectorate, is so lax and complex in the procedures it specifies that, far from curbing or discouraging this pernicious action by the bosses, it seems to favor it.

The examples of cessation of activity which we give below are indicative of the singularly criminal nature of the new management strategy.

The List Is Getting Longer

Layoffs are coming one after another; plants are closing without any valid reason; hundreds of families thus find themselves deprived of a means of earning a living. Thousands of workers are threatened with the same fate in the near future.

The situation is serious. It is imperative to remedy the situation and put an end to what threatens to become a catastrophe. Certain measures appear logical over the short term: they consist principally in having the workers take charge of any company which will have closed its doors and which could, therefore, be considered vacant. The following are examples:

--Fonderie des Tabords (metallurgy)	350 workers
--Africain Bioux et Caisse	258 workers
--Buro Metal S.A.	140 workers
--Fortun-Select (paper mill)	140 workers
--Khmira Jebbia (food processing)	94 workers
--SOGETAM	37 workers
--Briquetterie Oulad Haddou [brick works]	33 workers
--Caisserie Jean Menier [box plant]	22 workers
--Hlous Abbes	8 workers
Total	1,082 workers

With an average of 7 persons dependent on each worker, we come up with 7,500 individuals deprived of funds.

BRIEFS

DETAINEES' HUNGER STRIKE--Five Meknes detainees, including Abdelwahed Belkebir, former president of the National Union of Moroccan Students (UNEM), have been on a hunger strike for 13 days to protest their detention without trial. Members of their families said on 18 March that the detainees' state of health gives "cause for concern."

[Text] [Paris LE MONDE in French 20 Mar 80 p 5]

AL MASSIRA DAM INAUGURATION--King Hassan officially opened the Al Massira dam on 13 March. It is located on Oum Er Rbia, midway between Casablanca and Marrakech, 28 km from Mechra Berabbou. Its capacity is 2.8 billion cubic meters and it covers 170 sq km. Among other contributions, the dam will supply water for phosphate related industries, for example the port of Jorf Al Asfar and its industrial complex; for irrigation of 50,000 new hectares in Doukkala bringing the total to 90,000; as well as hydroelectric power from two French turbines of 62.5 megawatts each.

[Summary] [Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 13 Mar 80 p 12]

CSO: 4400

BRIEFS

AMBASSADOR TO CUBA--Havana--Mohammed Fadhel, member of the Polisario Political Bureau, on Wednesday presented his credentials as ambassador of the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic to Cuba to Juan Almeida, member of the Politbureau and deputy chairman of the Council of State of Cuba. The ceremony took place in the presence of Rene Amillo, Cuban deputy foreign minister. [LD060430 Algiers APS in French 1100 GMT 5 Apr 80 LD]

CSO: 4400

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